Week ending December 13 1958

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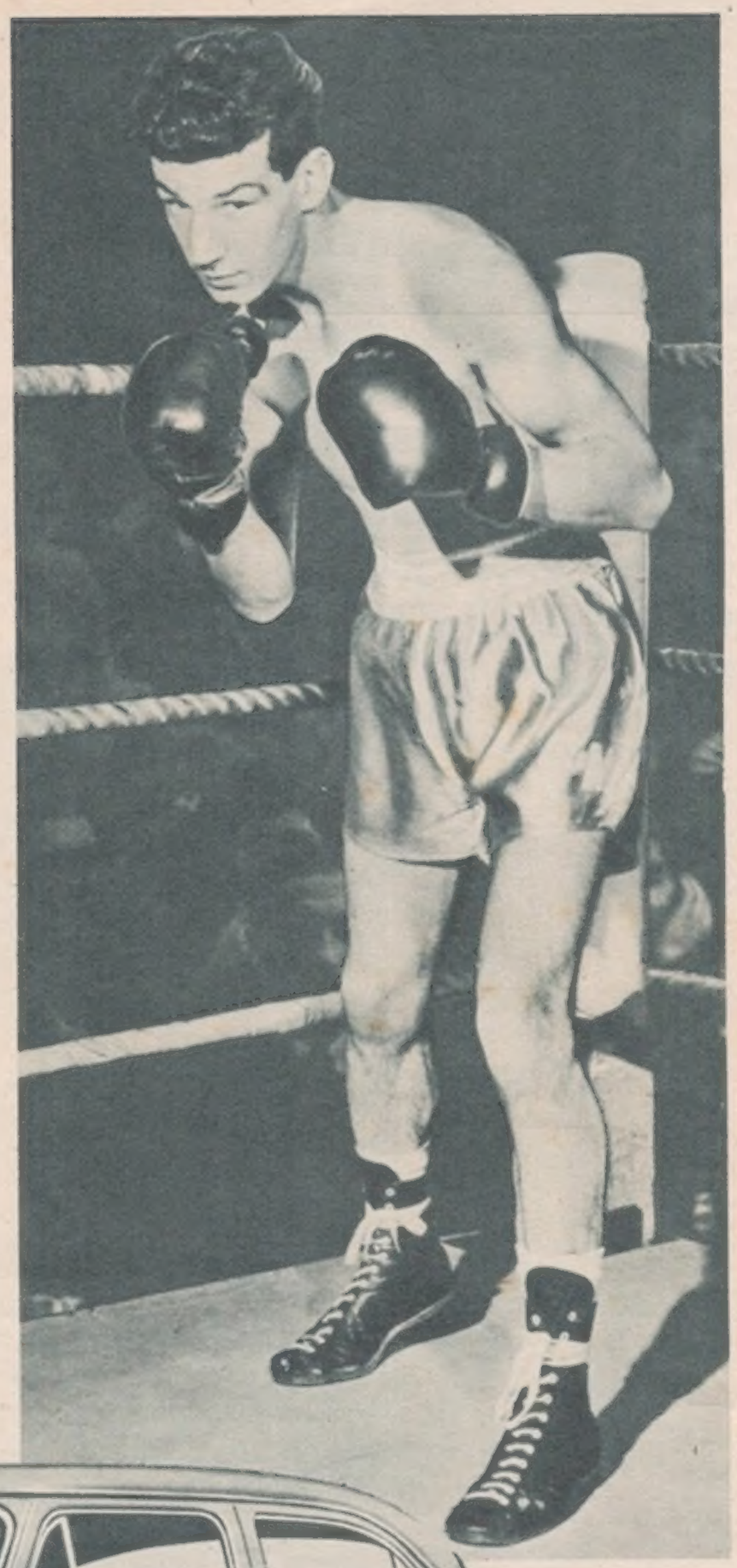

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CHANCERY 3344 DEC. 13, 1958
VOLUME 104 NUMBER 2737

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The Cover

HERE'S a husband basking in the glow of a job well done. Fifty-seven cards signed and addressed, and only a few left to find homes for. So now he sits back and fondly imagines that it's all over for another year. Artist Zelinski's cover wife knows this is one card game that just can't be won. No matter how hard they try to leave none of their friends ungreeted, they will spend Christmas morning looking sheepishly at cards received from people they have somehow forgotten.

Free Speech

JOHN BULL and ILLUSTRATED pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post, and in our feature, "We Advise."

Self-Selling

WE teachers get a regular surprise when school-leavers take their first jobs. My most recent experience was at our old boys' dance, where I met most of last year's fifth form.

I greeted several boys who had seemed to me to be in every way equipped to enter promising occupations. With one exception, they were all languishing in wretched, blind-alley jobs.

But other fellows who had distinguished themselves at school only because they were slick-talking idlers seemed to be well set for life.

Can it be that I do not know my own pupils well enough?

Or should all our schools have a course to teach boys the right approach to adult business society, so that the more worthwhile ones do not lose the chance of jobs because of their diffidence, awkwardness and inability to "sell" themselves effectively?—C. J. K., Birmingham, 2.

About Turn

Is JOHN BULL studied in the War Office? The recent announcement that bullet-proof waistcoats are being rushed to Cyprus suggests that this is so.

I recall that when a reader put up the idea of the waistcoats ("Free Speech," August 23) the War Office said that they would be too hot to wear in Cyprus and would not offer adequate protection.

Later ("Free Speech," October 4) a retired senior army officer challenged the War Office view. His opinion was confirmed by a footnote which you published from a ballistics expert.

At least we can congratulate the War Office on having the courage to change its opinion in the face of convincing evidence published in JOHN BULL.—GEORGE K. SAUNDERS, Bensham Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey.

Curtain Up

This is the busy season for amateur theatricals, so a tip on getting a scene on to a backdrop may be useful.

Take an ordinary black and white photographic negative of the artist's sketch—or a colour transparency of the actual scene—and sandwich it between glass to make a slide.

The sketch or scene is projected on to the backdrop and adjusted until perfect in size and definition. Then the outline and detail are drawn in charcoal. Proportions and positions are thus perfect from the beginning. Colouring follows in the normal way.—C. W. T. WYATT, Weymouth, Dorset.

Tucked In

Your readers who are puzzled because beds in Scotland are shorter than those in England ("Free Speech," November 1, 22 and 29) forget an important point.

It is that until the beginning of this century, most working-class houses in Scotland were built with a bed recess in the kitchen.—S. EASTER, Findlay Gardens, Edinburgh.

"Quite right," says a firm of Scottish building contractors. "The recesses were simple cupboards let into the wall. Their length was usually under six feet."

Vacation Votes

Why not declare General Election days a general holiday, with pay?

This would enable supporters and helpers of political parties to

give all possible backing to the candidates.

And it seems the fairest solution to this controversy about the removal of restrictions on the number of cars which may be used for taking voters to the polling stations.—S. R. PEARSON, Fuller Street, Cleethorpes, Lincs.

The Liberal Party says: "The germ of a good idea. We'd welcome it if it enabled more people to vote."

From the Labour Party: "This has never been discussed at our party conferences—so we can't comment."

And the Conservative Party says: "On the face of it, there's very little evidence of any need to change the present arrangements. The law makes adequate provision for all to vote."

Dog's Life

It is a marvel to me how women get away with things just because they happen to be women.

The other day, while coming out of a park, my dog slipped its lead and ran on to the road. What happened? Only that a woman—she was a complete stranger—ticked me off for not keeping the animal under control.

Women seem to think that they can treat men like naughty children. And we poor, polite masculine fools just take it, not being sharp enough to make the retorts which would put them in their place.

If women want to be the equal of men, they should conduct themselves in the same way as men.

Let us all start telling them where they get off.—W. R., Wallington, Surrey.

And to that an official of the International Alliance of Women says: "We suffer more at the hands of men than men suffer from us. Masculine officials, particularly, seem to reserve much of their rudeness for women."

Killing Point

I cannot help feeling that Lord Dowding's objection to vivisection (JOHN BULL, November 22) is the result of a natural but irrational attachment to animals.

Lord Dowding was formerly chief of Fighter Command. So presumably he does not object to killing and injuring human beings, provided there is good enough reason—such as self-defence, the protection of other lives and the winning of the war against Germany.

Why, then, does he so strongly object to killing and injuring animals, provided there is good reason—such as self-protection by winning the war against disease?

Surely it can only be that he feels an attachment to dogs, cats and mice that rational argument cannot overcome.—R. J. HOLLINGDALE, Bramley Hill, Croydon, Surrey.

"There may be good reasons for killing in warfare," says Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding. "But I deny the basic assumption that there are similarly good reasons for experimenting on living animals—and many eminent medical men agree with me."

Pest Control

Two men were each fined £5 at Gretna recently for poaching rabbits.

Surely this is ridiculous, since farmers and the government have

been doing everything possible to encourage the destruction of these pests.—A. WYPER, Overtown Road, Newmains, Lanarkshire.

"'Rabbits certainly are pests," says the National Farmers' Union. "But so are most poachers, for as well as trespassing, they often cause damage to property."

Starke Facts

I enjoy JOHN BULL very much—it is so unusual and interesting.

But tell me, who does those funny little drawings illustrating some of the letters in "Free Speech"? I nearly fall off my chair laughing at them.—MRS. DOREEN BUTTERWORTH, Chadderton, near Oldham.

They are the work of Leslie Hugh Starke, a fifty-three year old Scot now living in London.

"My cartoons are my hobby as well as my occupation," he says.

A book of his cartoons has recently been published. It is called "Starke Parade" (Max Reinhardt, 20s.), and includes many from "John Bull."

Blank Card

My daughter completed a course at a commercial college. Then for two months she tried unsuccessfully to get a job as a shorthand-typist.

In the end, she was reluctantly compelled to accept a different type of post.

When she applied for an employment card at the local exchange, she was told that she was liable to National Insurance contributions, as a non-employed person, for the period prior to the

Encourage him to collect

CORGI TOYS

The ideal Christmas present for the modern boy

GIFT SET No. 4
34/6
BRISTOL-FERRANTI "BLOODHOUND" GUIDED MISSILE. WITH LAUNCHER, LOADING TROLLEY AND R.A.F. LAND-ROVER

Tow the Bristol-Ferranti "Bloodhound" Guided Missile by R.A.F. Land-Rover to the firing point on a special trolley, raise it on its "hydraulic jacks", load it on to the Launching Ramp and raise the Missile to the Firing position.
Bristol-Ferranti "Bloodhound" Guided Missile on Launching Ramp only . . . 18s. 6d.

Real windows, faired in headlamps, wrap-round windscreens, commercial vehicles with hydraulic action—just a few of the outstanding die-cast model features "CORGI" Toys were first to introduce. Now "CORGI" Toys are first again—with super detailed Rocket Age Equipment. He can erect his own "CORGI" Rocket Site with these up-to-the-minute models, each excitingly authentic—each model capturing the atmosphere of the space age.

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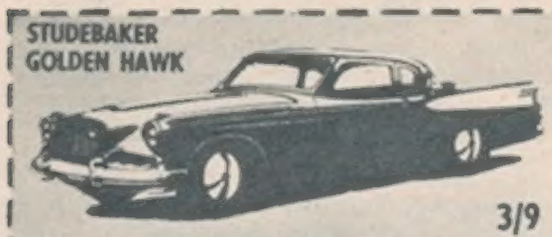
E.R.F. TIPPER 5/9

STUDEBAKER GOLDEN HAWK 3/9



LOTUS XI 3/6 LE MANS RACING CAR

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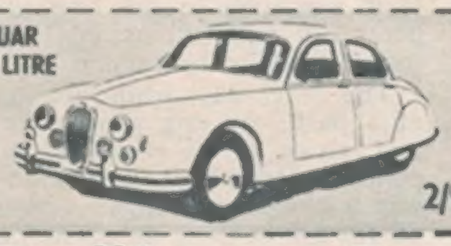
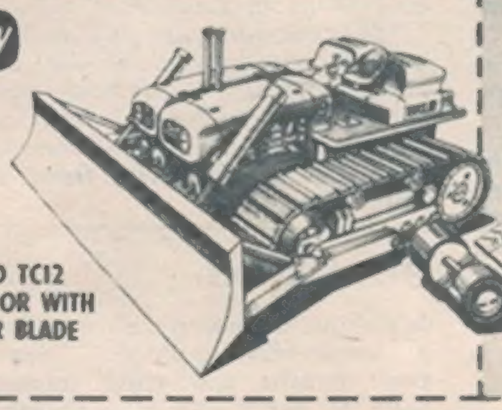


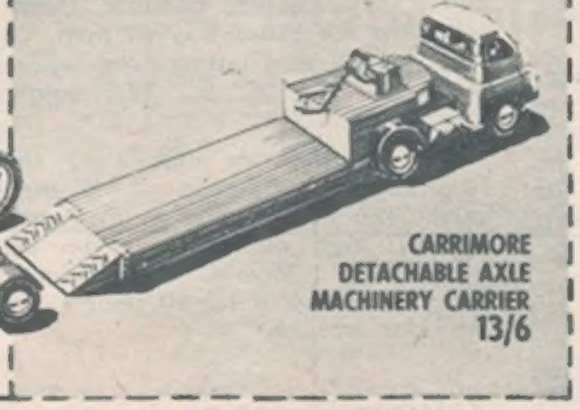
RILEY PATHFINDER POLICE CAR 3/6

NEW B.R.M. RACING CAR 3/3

NEW



EUCLID TC12 TRACTOR WITH DOZER BLADE 17/6



CARRIMORE DETACHABLE AXLE MACHINERY CARRIER 13/6

If your boy is a "CORGI" Toys enthusiast, he can become a member of the "CORGI" Model Club by filling in this Form and posting it to the above address, together with a Postal Order for 1/6. In return he will receive his Certificate, his Club Badge beautifully enamelled in Red and Gold, a Corgi Catalogue and a copy of the latest Club Magazine.

I enclose P.O. for 1/6d. J.B

NAME..... AGE.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

.....

Free Speech

continued from page 3

application. Where is the money to come from to pay these contributions? — J. DONOVAN, Deerpark Drive, Belfast.

"Immediately she ceased studying at the college she became liable to contributions," says the Ministry of Labour and National Insurance. "But in fact, because of the special circumstances, she was told that no action would be taken.

"She could, immediately on leaving the college, have claimed exemption from payments. Had she done so, her benefits would not have been affected."

Saving Clauses

Now that hire purchase is being used so extensively, it might be a good idea for the government to bring in a standard H.P. agreement.

The purchaser would then sign an H.P. document with confidence, knowing that there were no important clauses in tiny print.—P. GENTIL, Stanford Road, Kensington, London, W.8.

"Acts of Parliament of 1938 and 1954 control these agreements very rigidly," says the Hire Purchase Trades Association. "They make a standard form unnecessary. And as regards important clauses in small print, no self-respecting business concern would think of using such methods."

Hoarding Out

I have just attended an auction sale at which the entire contents of a house were up for disposal.

It was sad to see many cases of cutlery going under the hammer—some still in their first wrappings.

Blankets, too, were in their original folds, never having been disturbed since the day they were bought. Many articles of personal clothing had not been worn.

I left without any of these bargains. But the experience did give me a firm determination that none of my goods would come under the hammer without being well used.

So I immediately got out our best china at teatime. And I put that new pair of blankets on the bed. From now on, I hoard nothing.—P. S., Brisbane Street, Greenock.

Keep Clear

I noticed two "No Parking" signs in the small front garden of a house. Now I am wondering just

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS

keeps practical homelovers up to date

● **Cracked windows:** A window pane which is badly cracked and cannot be replaced immediately may be painted over with waterglass. This will hold the pieces firmly together for a considerable time.

● **Removing heat marks:** White heat marks on polished furniture can sometimes be removed by rubbing them with a little camphorated oil on a piece of cotton wadding. You may have to make several applications. Polish finally with a dry duster.

● **Self-selecting hod:** The Super-Hod is a cunning invention which allows you to select, from the same hod-full, different sizes of fuel. It has a built-in filter which separates slack from lumps and an adjustable lid which selects one or both of the two compartments. The Super-Hod is made by S. Sims & Sons, Ltd., Britannia Works, New Whittington, Chesterfield, and costs 37s. 6d. from ironmongers.

● **Stronger sanding discs:** Sanding discs for use with power tools are fixed in the middle by means of a cross cut, which weakens the disc slightly in use. To make your discs last longer, paste a circular piece of stout brown paper to the back of the disc with impact adhesive before fixing to the tool.

● **Handy glue:** A good addition to the family repair kit is the "Glue Master," a non-smelly, non-messy glue in a special polythene bottle which releases and spreads the glue at the same time, by piston-valve action. The "Glue Master" can be used for leather, leatherette, fabric, paper and card. It dries quickly, but not so quickly that you cannot use it for large areas. The "Glue Master" costs 4s. 6d.

● **Rust stains:** To get rust stains out of fabric use a solution of oxalic acid, rinsing well after each application. If the stains are not bad use lemon juice and salt mixed.

● **Tiles in one piece:** Time-saving form of tiling is a plastic-coated hardboard for wall fixing in bathrooms or kitchens in a ready-made tiled design. Laconite plastic-coated wallboard is made in twelve colours with tile joins in a contrasting shade. This waterproof and long-lasting wall covering only costs 2s. a square foot from builders' merchants.

Brighter lighting. Easy to fit and equally easy to clean, the new G.E.C. Gaylon pendant and table light fittings are inexpensive and colourful. In two parts of moulded P.V.C., the top is coloured, the lower half a white diffuser. The two are fixed together to form a flattened sphere with a polished brass ring. In two sizes of pendant fitting, 11 in. for a 60-watt lamp, 29s., and 16¼ in. for a 100-watt lamp, 39s. 11d., it is also sold as a table lamp with black metal legs and a handle, 60s. In red, yellow or white from electrical shops.

CAN I HELP?

I like to hear about other people's homes. If you have homemaking or handyman ideas to share with other readers please send them to me, with photographs or rough drawings where possible. If you have a homemaking problem I shall be glad to help you. Write to me, Roger Smithells, c/o "John Bull and Illustrated," 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope.

THIS IS THE VAUXHALL VICTOR. This is Britain's No. 1 Export Car. Since it was announced in February 1957 more Victors have been exported than any other British model. On the continent and in the Commonwealth the Victor is leading the parade of British cars. In the highly competitive Canadian market, for instance, 60% more Victors have been sold this year than any other British model. And although shipments to the United States did not start until September 1957, by August of this year the Victor was the top British car in registrations.

But you don't live in the United States or Canada, in Belgium or Hawaii. Is there anything in all these facts that interests you?

Yes. All these people who have been buying Victors so eagerly are tough critics of a motor car. They expect it to 'take' a great deal more in hard, long, fast driving than most British drivers ever do. They don't buy on hearsay, either. For them a trial run is *really* a trial run, and while they're having it they're bound to compare the Victor with the cars they're used to and with the best the rest of the world has to offer. *And they still go for the Victor!*

Why? We think the answer is because the Victor gives more *total* satisfaction when you drive it . . . You can find bigger cars (if size is all-important); faster cars (if you don't care about m.p.g.); more luxurious cars (if you don't mind the price); but you won't find another car that gives such *all-round* pleasure, pride and satisfaction to its owner.

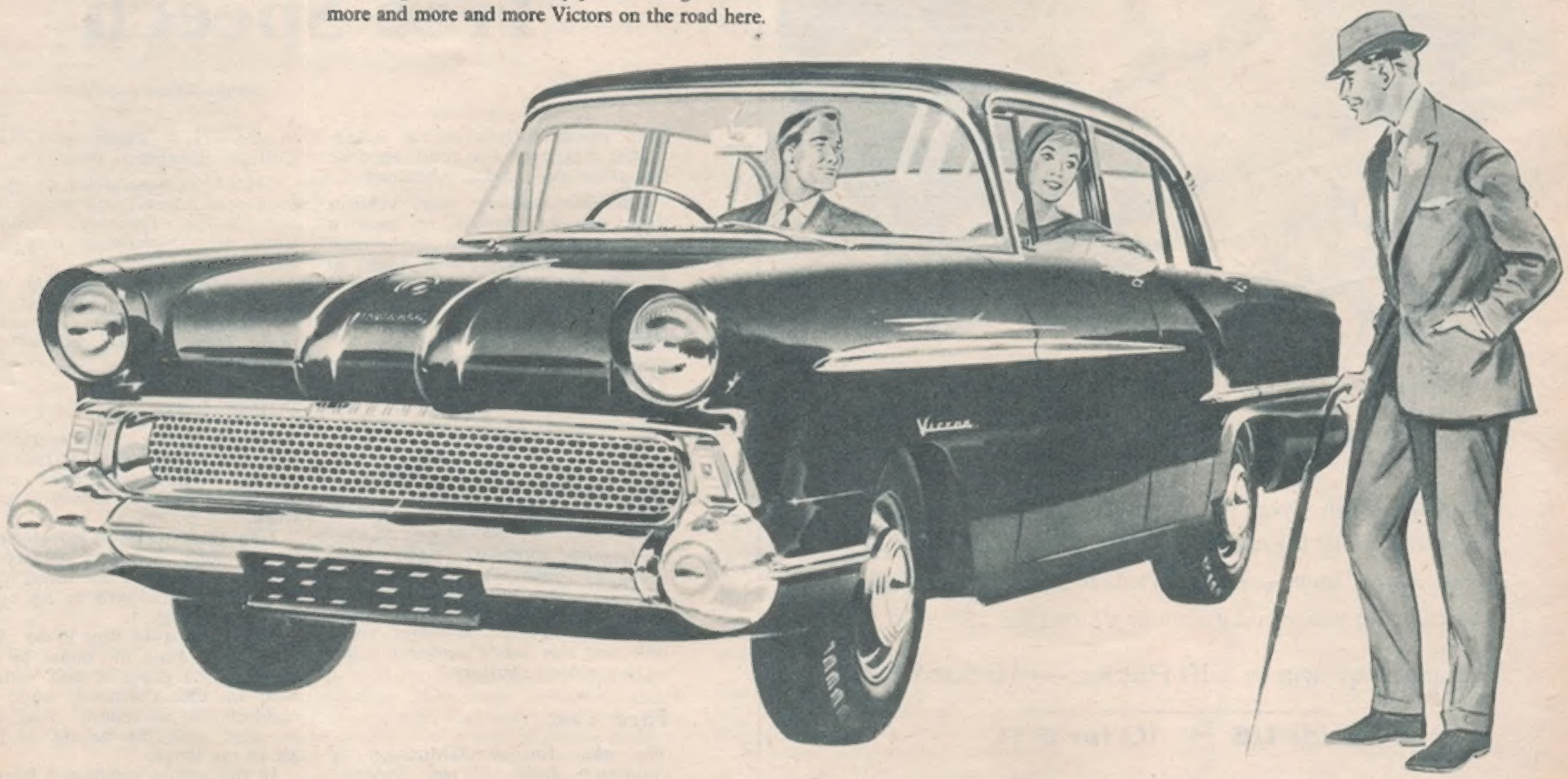
It's a car that makes it easy to drive well. It's lively, responsive, supremely handle-able. It's as fast as most people need (over 75 m.p.h.). It's astonishingly economical. It holds the road superbly — and the more experienced a driver you are, the more you'll appreciate this. It has an all-synchromesh gearbox, light yet accurate steering, big-drum brakes that take hold powerfully and progressively. It has a panoramic windscreen (you'll soon be seeing them everywhere!) that gives you a wonderfully wide safe view of things ahead. It has heaps of elbow-room for four people, and really big luggage space. And it *looks* good — low, modern, stylish — a car you're really pleased to be seen in! . . .

Yes, that's it. There's more *all-round* pleasure in driving a Victor! But don't take our word for it — or anyone else's for that matter. Those export customers don't! Do what they do: *Drive the Victor yourself!* Get hold of your nearest Vauxhall dealer this very week and arrange a trial run. Take the family along too.

Then you'll know why the Victor has become Britain's No. 1 export car — and why you're seeing more and more and more Victors on the road here.

Britain's No. 1 Export Car

Since it was announced in February, 1957, more Vauxhall Victors have been exported than any other British model.



VICTOR £498 plus £250.7s PT (£748.7s) · VICTOR SUPER £520 plus £261.7s PT (£781.7s) · VICTOR ESTATE CAR £620 plus £311.7s PT (£931.7s)

and the 6 cylinder models VELOX £655 plus £328.17s PT (£983.17s) · CRESTA £715 plus £358.17s PT (£1,073.17s)

men like

Manikins

for Christmas

MANIKINS are very good small cigars indeed—cool smoking, long lasting, with the mild Havana flavour that makes them every man's favourite. You'll *really* be thanked when you give him MANIKINS.

Flat pocket tins in Gift Packs — 15 for **10/4½**

2 for **1/5** · 10 for **6/11**

also in packets of 5, and boxes of 25, 50 and 100

J. R. FREEMAN & SON LTD. (ESTD 1830)

What does a beautiful woman do when she suspects that her husband is a killer . . . ?

Read the answer in our compelling new serial of drama and romance . . . SEE PAGE 31

Free Speech

continued from page 4

how much jurisdiction a householder has over the road opposite his premises.—L. L., Aberdeen.

"In the ordinary way, vehicles may not be parked in such a manner as to deprive the householder of reasonably free access to his premises," says a barrister.

Seeing Red

I am puzzled by the behaviour of a robin in my garden. When I put out bread crumbs, this robin chases all other birds away.

At first, I thought it an example of sheer greed. Then I noticed that he never touches any of the bread himself. — MRS. ETHEL SMITH, Worrall, near Sheffield.

"Robins establish rights over territory which they defend very pugnaciously against other birds," says an expert of the Natural History Museum. "It seems probable that this lady's garden is within that robin's territory."

Fare Test

The plea for standardization of children's fares ("Free Speech," November 22) reminds me of the system used in Italy. There, the matter is decided by the child's height. This seems better than applying an age limit, since children of the same age can vary greatly in size.—N. J. WENTWORTH, Radley College, Abingdon, Berkshire.

"Measures are carried on all our buses and trams," says an official of the Italian Embassy. "Children stand against them as they board the vehicles.

"If they are no more than about three feet four inches tall, they travel free. Over that, they pay full fare. There are no reduced fares for children."

Night Life

Recently I got a job working at night. The difference it has made to my life is enormous and I would not think of returning to day work.

Now there seems to be a lot more useful time in each twenty-four hours. I can have the seven hours' sleep I need and still be up by ten in the morning.

Then I have the time to do all my odd jobs around the house by daylight, play a game of golf with my wife in the afternoon while our children are at school. And I go to work with the benefit of fresh air in my lungs.

In the school holidays I have all day to spend with my family.

I never have any transport difficulties, because I travel into town when almost everyone else is moving out of it.—E. G. G., Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

Time is the gift of the Swiss

THERE IS NO more eloquent gift than a fine jewelled-lever Swiss watch for someone you love, the gift that stands for constancy and friendship.

Measure, if you can, the value of such a gift! A fine watch has reason to be proud of its Swiss origin, of its meticulous workmanship, its unrivalled beauty. For more than 300 years, Swiss craftsmen, intent on measuring time, have kept *ahead* of time in designing watches. *Time is the Art of the Swiss.*

There are Swiss-inspired watch ideas for every need and all occasions. Watches that resist water—dirt—shock—and even magnetism. Watches that split seconds, do arithmetic, measure speed, sound and distance. Tiny gem-studded watches for the ladies, and elegant, wafer-thin watches to please the most exacting man. And, of course, time's most wanted miracle—the self-winding watch. Ask your jeweller to help you choose. *His knowledge is your safeguard.*

It's the combination that matters—the word "Swiss" on the watch *plus* the *jewelled-lever* movement inside. Your Jeweller can tell you why this combination guarantees you a truly fine watch.

SWISS FEDERATION OF WATCH MANUFACTURERS

MASK OF FEAR

by BRIAN CLEEVE

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

The beautiful Louise was his if he

a fine career. But

I'M too old for this, thought Jean. Too old. But a voice from deeper in his mind whispered: *Too afraid. Too afraid.* There was a cold sickness in his stomach, and the palms of his hands were wet and greasy with sweat. He wiped them on the thighs of his track-suit and wondered if anyone were watching.

A long way down the hall, Paul Bresnard was limbering up, the familiar, arrogant red track-suit swaying like a flame in the chill, shadowy distances of the huge Salle d'Armes. Jean heard voices, the slap of a foot on one of the fencing strips, the whine of blades touching, echoing in the dank emptiness of the early morning.

Across the hall hung the scoreboards, blank now, waiting for the day's results that would end in somebody being champion. Jean looked at them, finding his own name on one of them, and shivered. "Raphael," he whispered, using his brother's name like a talisman, the way he used to whisper it long ago, when they had been small children together in the dark, and he had been afraid.

BUT that was a long time ago. All that was left of Raphael now was a name to say, like a talisman, and a few snapshots fading in an album. There was one of Raphael in fencing kit, taken two days before . . . before it happened.

It had been a day like this; a hall like this, big, empty and echoing; the rubber strip twenty-four metres long by two metres wide; the two figures in white, facing each other, crouching a little, balanced like steep springs, the long electric wires trailing away from behind their shoulders to the registering box; their sword blades almost tip to steel tip, still as death, yet shimmering with tension, like reflections in a mirror.

It had been against Svenson, that fight; Svenson, the big ugly, friendly Swede, who laughed as he fought. The president had stepped back, the crowd watching had stilled into quietness and, like a great bull leaping, Svenson had come for Raphael, steel blade arrowing at Raphael's mask, and behind it sixteen stone of bone and muscle, hurling forward, sunlight quivering on steel. And Raphael had done what he'd done a thousand times in practice, reached far back with his left foot and thrust with his own point at the thick white wrist driving at him behind the round steel guard of Svenson's sword and the three-foot blade.

As always, he did it as it should be done. Jean had seen Raphael's point touch Svenson's arm, sinking home the small fraction that was enough to complete the electric circuit, set the warning bell ringing and the light flickering in the scoring-box. Already Jean had been letting out his breath in a long sigh of relief.

And then it had happened; Svenson crashing on like a battering ram with a steel spike in front; the point of his sword crunching against Raphael's wire mask, finding a weakness in it, a wire that had rusted; sinking into it as if the big Swede were sheathing his sword in Raphael's head; until the blade came out at the back of the skull, and there was blood, and somebody screaming: "Raphael, Raphael"; his own voice screaming his brother's name, who was already beyond the reach of any voice.

"No," whispered Jean, remembering. "No." He bent down, bowing his head over his knees, his face a white mask.

There were footsteps beside him, light and quick. "Jean, Jean, what is it?"

He looked up and she was there, her face as white as his own. "Louise," he said. "What are you doing here? Didn't I tell you not to come?"

She took his face in her hands. "Don't worry, Jean," she whispered. "It doesn't matter what happens today. Nothing matters except us."

But it did matter. It mattered like life and death. Because he was too old to go on any longer. *I'm thirty-eight,* he thought. If he didn't win this time, he'd never win, never try again.

And if he didn't win . . . if he were never champion, he could never start the fencing school he and Louise had planned over the years. The pupils wouldn't come unless the master had himself achieved what they were hoping to achieve. He had to have been a champion, and he never had.

I never will be now, he thought; quarter-finals, semi-finals — heaven knew how many times; but never even the final round, let alone the victor's stand, the medal, his name in the records.

It was as if his hand lost its knowledge, his brain its cunning when the vital time came. He'd slow down that fraction that made the difference between winning and losing, and he'd lose. Almost as if he wanted to lose. Because, as he stood there, he wouldn't be Jean facing a man he knew that he could beat. He would be Raphael. And the man opposite him would be Svenson. And between them lay the shadow of death.

Paul Bresnard came by with two of the Italians. Paul was rich and young and insolently sure of himself. He was smiling that thin, sneering smile of his that seemed to find Jean amusingly contemptible from head to foot; for the flecks of grey in his dark hair; for the neat, small patches on his fencing jacket where Louise had mended it; for the lightness of his fencing bag with its mere three epées, compared to Paul's own monstrous collection.

THE three men smiled; grinned at Jean and then tipped their hands to Louise. "Hallo, champ," Paul said to her. Because she had won.

"I had to," she had whispered to Jean when it was all over. "I knew it was the last chance I had." And then she realized what she had said and tried to cover it. But it was too late; because she was a lot younger than Jean, and, if it was the last time for her, how would it be for him?

The clock struck the quarter hour. "First call-over for the fourth quarter-final of the Open Epée Championship," a voice rang out. "A. Rinaldi, J. Bellay, J. Baker, P. Hrotny, V. Masek, T. Squires." And there was a sudden gathering of men, very tall and easy moving. Jean was the smallest of the six.

Then the first two were called, and Louise turned away. "I won't watch," she said. She touched Jean on the shoulder. "I'll see you afterwards in the canteen." And for two hours she sat there on a wooden stool with a cup of coffee growing cold in front of her, while casual people passed and repassed and called out, "Hallo, champ." But there was only one voice she wanted to hear.

As the clock struck twelve, it came. A swift, light step and a voice whispering in her ear. "Okay."

The clock ticked, and they couldn't talk easily. Soon it would be time for the semi-finals. Thirty minutes more. Twenty. Ten. At last Jean got to his feet with a white, hard face and tried to smile.

"I won't come down," said Louise through stiff lips. "It isn't good for you if I'm there."

"I know," said Jean. "Try not to care about it, my darling. You said this morning that it doesn't matter."

But I was wrong! she wanted to scream

won—and so was

first he must beat both a man and a ghost

Fiercely Jean pulled Louise to him. "What is between you and Bresnard?" he said. "Nothing," Louise whispered, "yet . . ."

Mask of fear

continued from previous page

after him. *I was wrong. It does matter. It does. It DOES. It isn't the fencing. Not the game downstairs. It's life. You're not just a professional loser in a silly game. You've made that game your life . . . our life . . . and you're losing at life. You're afraid of winning. Afraid of taking life in both hands and making it give you what you want.*

But she said nothing, and the two men went down the stairs out of her sight, and she sat on with her eyes tight shut and her hands clenched till the nails hurt her palms. How long before they came back? And what did it matter how long? She knew the answer before they came. But still she prayed. *Oh God, let it be different this time.*

ONCE she heard his name. "Bellay wins," and a little burst of clapping. But it meant nothing.

Then it was more than two hours, and they must be finishing. Maybe Jean was finished already. She leaned back in the chair like somebody coming out of a trance, and looked at the clock.

Two hours and ten minutes. And down on the floor Jean blinked and felt as if a cloud had lifted off his mind and he could see for the first time. And what he saw was Svenson. One part of his mind knew that it was the American, Baker. That this was the last fight of the semi-finals; that he had already let himself lose too many fights in this round; and that, for him, and for Baker, it was the decider.

He knew that he could beat Baker if nothing hung on it. But it wasn't Baker standing there, smiling at him through the meshed wires of his mask. It was Svenson, who had killed Raphael.

He felt his hand shaking. A long way away he heard somebody laugh. "Bellay's dreaming again." And then, from high up, from the gallery where the canteen was, Louise's voice crying: "You've got to win. You've got to win."

I can't, his heart whispered. And Baker came again. Jean put out his hand with a reflex action of defence, and a second time the bell rang. They were one point all, and four to go.

"Bravo," Louise's voice came crying. "Bravo. You've got to win." And then an attendant came and hushed her.

"I've got to win," said Jean, as if her voice had hypnotized him. He forced his leaden legs to move and he had two points. And suddenly it wasn't Svenson there any more. Only Baker. And Jean was giving him a fencing lesson, sitting as easily in his crouch as if he were riding an old, quiet pony: take his blade, riposte, tempt him to parry, then tempt him out again till his defence is wide as an open door and then in like a bird darting, putting the point almost where he liked; on the wrist, the forearm, under the wrist again. And the last bell rang.

UNBELIEVINGLY, Jean whispered: "I'm in the final," when Louise came to him. "After twenty years. I don't care now." He let his body loll as if he were drugged. "Nothing matters now."

"But it does," said Louise. "It matters the whole world."

"Please," said Jean tiredly. "Not now. I think I'll go to the locker-room and sleep for an hour."

"No, you won't," said Louise harshly. "I want to talk to you. Come and walk with me outside. The air will freshen you."

For a moment she thought he was going to refuse. Then he shrugged and smiled. He pulled on his track-suit and flung a coat over his shoulders. "Okay," he said. "What difference will it make?"

She dug her fingers into his arm. "Don't be like that," she whispered savagely.

They went out of the big, echoing building into the winter twilight of the street. When they came to the river bank, they leaned on the thick stone wall that protected it, feeling it smooth and cold under their hands. The river ran sullen as iron beneath them. Louise shivered.

"What is it, *chérie?*" Jean said, trying to tuck his hand under her elbow, trying to feel close to her. She moved away from him, turning to face him with the same brusque movement.

"Only this," she said, trying not to see his face, trying not to think that she loved him, that she would never love anybody else as long as she lived; trying not to think of the risk she was taking. "Only this," she repeated. "That today has got to be different, or else it's the end. For you and me. I can't go on like this any longer."

"You can say this to me?" he whispered.

"I must. You've tried to make failure a virtue—pathetic, appealing. It isn't. It's just failure. And you can't build a marriage on failure."

"But . . ." he said, "but. . . ." He shook his head as if he were suddenly blind. "You can't put that much importance just on winning. No one can be sure of winning. . . ."

"You could, if you had the guts. You've beaten all of them one time or another. Only, when it matters, you can't win. It's because you're afraid of winning. Afraid of being a full man."

"It isn't true," he whispered. "It's Raphael. You know why I can't win." He put his hands to his eyes as if to shut Raphael out.

Still her voice struck at him. "It's a lie," she said. "You're not afraid of dying. You're afraid of living."

"Stop," he said. "Stop."

"If it were just that you were a second-rate fencer, I wouldn't mind," she said savagely. "We could do something else. Start a garage. Grow vegetables. Keep a shop. But you'd fail at that, too."

"Shut up," he said, with a sudden, furious anger in his voice.

"You would," she cried. "You'd fail, and fail, and find some other wonderful excuse for failing. You're not a man. You're a boy. A boy with grey in his hair."

HIS hand caught her across the cheek with a swift, flat shock of violence. She stared at him, her eyes wide.

"Paul Bresnard wouldn't have done that," she said. She thought he was going to strike her again, and closed her eyes, wincing in anticipation of the pain. But inside her heart a voice was singing. *Maybe I've won. Maybe I've really won.* But, instead of hitting her, he caught her by the lapels of her coat and dragged her close to him, so that she was staring up into a face she had never seen before, hard and strong.

"What is between you and Bresnard?" he whispered.

"Nothing," she said, "yet." She felt him lifting her by the lapels. *This is it,* she thought. *This is the last hit. Will he fight for me, or let me go?*

"I would like to kill Bresnard," said Jean softly. "Maybe I will. But first I'll show you what sort of a winner he is, since you think so much of winning. You bitch." He twisted her round and they went back in a tight silence.

They still talk about that final in the schools. They were eight fencers in it, as there have to be, four coming up from each semi-final, instead of three as in earlier rounds. But there were only two who mattered: Bresnard and Jean.

It was as if they were brushing their other opponents out of their way in a savage eagerness to get to one another. Two, three, four victories each. Five. Six. And men who had known and discounted Jean for twenty years as a pleasant second-rater, began to watch as if they had never seen him before.

Until it was the last fight. Paul Bresnard against Jean. Six victories to each of them, and victory in this fight to decide which of them was champion, which of them was to carry the gold medal from the stand and have his name in the record books. *When this is finished,* Jean thought, *I will kill her.*

PAUL said: *"Bonne chance, mon vieux,"* waved his hand, grinned. Jean said nothing. He went through the motions of the salute, adjusted his mask and slipped into his crouched *en garde* position. How could a man be afraid of winning? Let her see if he was afraid.

Paul was coming now; his blade flickering like steel lightning, out and back again. Turn of the wrist. Parry. Hold him for a second. Then slam his own blade along Paul's. Metal rasping on metal, the point sinking an inch deep into the white cloth of Paul's sleeve, and the buzzer rasping, the light flickering, and a whisper in the crowd.

One up, thought Jean. *I have him. Have him under my hand.* But then, for a sick second, the old Jean came back, hesitated, and the new Jean stood and watched him, watched him waver as Paul came in again, the hand paralysed, the brain in slow motion.

I am afraid, thought Jean wonderingly. *I am afraid of winning.* Paul's blade touched him, and they were one-all, the frail, small, precious lead gone again in the second of hesitation. *She was right,* Jean thought. *It's this I'm afraid of. I am afraid of winning.*

And then he knew that to be always a smiling, boyish loser is not enough. That sooner or later a man has to be more than that to be a man. There has to be steel inside. And, while he was thinking, he was fencing, one part of his brain like ice, holding Paul off, meeting him, matching him. But only matching him. Three all. Four all. One to go.

SUDDENLY he realized that his feet were blistered until the blood was a warm slime in his shoes, and the long, iron-hard muscles in his legs were on fire, screaming each time he moved. One more to go—and nothing left in him. Nothing except pain. And again he saw Louise's face, the dark red bruise of his fingers on the pale skin, her wider eyes, the fine thinness of her throat. *She's watching this,* he thought. *She's waited with me for this moment, year after year. And now am I going to throw it away for pain, for cowardice?*

He crouched deeper, taking a fierce pleasure in the fire of agony that shot up his thighs. He gripped the floor with his bloody feet, and leaped. And, even before he leaped, he knew that the point was home, that not Paul, not any fencer on earth could beat that blade.

Then there were arms round him and Louise was hanging on his neck, crying. "You made it," she whispered. Paul Bresnard was there, too, shaking his hand until his arm seemed like a broken handle. And, oddly enough, Paul's smile was warm and friendly and glad. But in all the crowd there was nobody real, except Louise. "Hallo, champ," she said, laughing through her tears.

He brushed his fist under her chin, smiling down at her. "Thanks," he said. "Thanks for everything."

And then she was clinging to him, her wet, cold cheek against his patched, mended jacket, close against the slamming of his heart. THE END

© *Brian Cleeve, 1958*

Jean thought of Louise as his epée drove hard into Paul's white sleeve. When this bout was over, he knew he would kill her . . .

It's the biggest blot on the nation's conscience —the tragedy of young lives ruined by broken homes. Now ROSAMOND FISHER, wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury, describes her plan to wipe out . . .

THE DISGRACE OF OUR Unwanted Children

A WELFARE visitor, sent to call on one of the "problem families" in her area, knocked for some time at the front door without getting a reply. At last an upstairs window opened violently. "Here you are," called a woman's voice.

There was a metallic tinkle in the road. "There's the key. And hang it up in the Town Hall when you've finished. It will be more use there than here."

This mother had had visits from twelve different social workers, all asking similar questions. I agree that she may have been unluckier than most, but unfortunately her experience was fairly typical of the present arrangements for helping families in trouble.

There are probation officers, health visitors, school attendance officers, sanitary inspectors, children's committees. All these and many others, all really dedicated people, do excellent work. But each of them is concerned with only one aspect of a family upset.

Statutory social workers do not as a rule find it possible to take over a case history from another department, and so the same pathetic and intimate family details may have to be related over and over again.

It is not surprising that, in this case, nearly every one of the twelve visitors made the same note: "'Mother apathetic and unresponsive."

The really distressing thing is that there is nobody whose job it is to help the family which is running into trouble before something dreadful happens. All the help that our admirable welfare services give comes to a family only after a calamity has occurred.

A girl of eleven was sent to an approved school because she was in moral danger at home. The man in the case was sent to prison. About a year later the mother wrote asking if her daughter could come home, because the man concerned had finished his sentence.

A welfare officer went to see the mother and talked about the child. During the conversation the mother mentioned that her daughter "was never the same after being in hospital." It turned out that, a few years before, the girl had gone into hospital to have her tonsils out. Then she caught scarlet fever which kept her away from home for two years.

Even a temporary break in home life, as in this case, may disastrously affect a child later on. And often it may have been a chance break to which no importance was attached at the time.

If there had been a service, whose workers were specially trained to deal with such problems, to which the mother could have turned in her early difficulties, she could have been advised and helped to deal with the child.

The Fisher Group

Three years ago, a group of social workers and other interested people got together to study this problem, and to consider what could be done to improve the treatment of the family—the vital basic unit of all society. I was asked to lead it, and so we became known as the Fisher Group.

As our investigations proceeded, it became more and more clear to us that what this country really needs is some sort of "Family Service."

The group felt that this need not be an elaborate organization. It might have a unit in every locality which would work in a cheerful and friendly atmosphere.

Someone would always be on duty (especially during the evenings) to see troubled parents, and the unit would need facilities for looking after young children so that mother or father could discuss their troubles with the social worker in peace.

The Family Service would not come knocking on doors, looking for trouble, but any member of a family should be able to turn to it for advice when the need arose.

Such a service would not displace the present children's departments—the health visitors, the child welfare clinics and so on, although it would work in close co-operation with them and, in fact, it might in time reduce the work of children's officers and probation officers and others who now have to deal with domestic disasters after they have happened.

Because it would be helping those who are not yet in serious trouble, its approach could be more human and less official, though its workers would have to be trained and experienced in social service.

Very few girls of today have had any real training or preparation for running a home when they marry. Many of them soon get into an efficient routine, and learn how to cope when their babies arrive. But there are others who feel at a loss, and realize that in this field of work they are, indeed, amateurs.

Compared with doctors, nurses, midwives and health visitors, these young mothers seem to know so little about the management of their babies—in the textbook sense.

But, nevertheless, they may resent being told, as they sometimes are, that their mother's advice is an old wives' tale. They may well get a feeling of inferiority, and look back longingly to the jobs they did before their babies were born—the jobs which they knew how to do.

One young mother was overheard talking to a friend in a market place. In the pushchair that she was wheeling was a baby boy, and her friend was admiring the child. He was a chubby baby, clean and well clothed and seemed to be in extremely good health.

A mother's words

But the mother said: "I shall be putting him away soon. They can do better for him than I can."

"They" were the local authority. This young woman was casually mentioning that she intended to hand over her child to public care. Such an unnatural attitude is, fortunately, rare. Luckily, too, it would not be quite so simple to "put him away," as she seemed to think.

But there are mothers who do not feel up to the task of bringing up their children. Such mothers also need the sympathetic advice and understanding help a family service could provide.

In Britain at this moment there are about 90,000 children in public care, some of them temporarily, but more than half of them on a long-term basis. The figures are proportionately the same as the figures of fifty years ago when the population was smaller. In this respect we have not advanced at all, and if these children were orphans with nobody to care for them, there would probably be not very much that we could do about it.

But in London, for example, the

continued on page 28

brandy for Christmas means Martell

THE LONG DRINK WITH GINGER ALE OR SODA

Make friends with **MARTELL**

COGNAC BRANDY AT ITS BEST

Street of a Thousand Treasures

Its shops lure millionaires, kings and queens to buy the most exclusive luxuries in the world

by REX GRIZELL

ONE day a few months ago, a fashionably dressed woman walked into a famous Bond Street jeweller's and seated herself in one of the comfortable leather armchairs in front of the showcases.

To the assistant who came quietly forward she explained, with some embarrassment, that she wished to sell a pair of black pearl ear-rings which she had been given but did not like.

The assistant examined the ear-rings and said that subject to the pearls being real they would offer £180 for them, but as it was virtually impossible to be sure without special tests, these would have to be made before the transaction could be completed.

The woman agreed to come back the following day at noon. An hour or so before she was due to arrive, two men entered the shop and introduced themselves as Scotland Yard detectives.

They produced a short list of valuable pieces of jewellery, and asked whether the firm had been asked to buy any of them. Included in the list was a pair of black pearl ear-rings, which, the detectives explained, had been stolen the day before from Asprey's, another jeweller's a few doors down the street.

They sat down to wait, and arrested the woman on her arrival.

"She stole only from the best firms in Bond Street, and she rarely walked more than fifty yards before offering the goods to one of the other famous jewellers," says an executive of the firm. If she had kept to diamonds, which can be valued on sight, she might have got away with it a bit longer.

A commissionaire held the door open as detectives escorted the woman across the thickly carpeted floor to a waiting car. The incident barely stirred the cathedral calm common to most Bond Street establishments—"shops" seems too ordinary a word.

Nothing disturbs the composure of the men who sell the best and most expensive goods in the world. A pair of £180 ear-rings is of no great moment to a firm where, as in one Bond Street jeweller's, even the sweepings of the workroom floor yield £500 a year in gold dust.

When Charles Laughton was preparing for his part in *Mutiny On The*

£2,000 That's the value Arthur Charatan puts on this amber goddess. His is the only shop in the world which sells nothing but amber

Street of a Thousand Treasures

Bounty he walked into Gieves', the naval outfitters, and asked whether they could advise him about the uniform worn by Captain Bligh.

No eyebrows were raised. "I'll inquire, sir," the assistant said. He went away and returned a few minutes later with an old leather-bound book which contained the measurements and specifications of the uniforms which the firm had made for Bligh in 1787.

Nowhere else in the world is the mixture quite so rich as in Bond Street. Luxurious beauty *salons* jostle art galleries showing the best of modern and classical paintings. The most expensive jewellery in the world, the finest linen, furniture from the palaces of kings and the homes of dukes, hand-made shirts, shoes and gloves, fine silver designed by one of Scandinavia's foremost artists, who is also a member of the Swedish royal house—all these can be bought in Bond Street.

Bond Street even has its own marriage bureau. Two peers, several members of Parliament and a number of millionaires have found partners there. At Sotheby's sale-rooms, works of art from all over the world are sold by auction.

Hill's, the firm of violin dealers, is rarely without a Stradivarius in stock. The average price is £3,000 to £4,000.

Not what it was

Long-established "members" are inclined to complain that Bond Street is not what it was. They refer to the infiltration from Oxford Street into the north end of New Bond Street of "popular" shops for women's goods, gowns, furs, handbags and so on. These firms are pleased to take short-term leases which do not appeal to businesses wishing to establish themselves permanently in Bond Street.

But even in the short stretch of Bond Street affected, there remain a famous gunmaker, an art gallery, an old-established jeweller, a luxury confectioner and other "exclusive" shops.

In spite of the numerous side turnings, traffic lights, two policemen on point duty all day and several policemen on patrol to deal with incidents, Bond Street presents a permanent traffic problem.

By day the pavements of Bond Street are crowded. Working girls brush shoulders with the famous and the fashionable, the wealthy and the curious.

Few people see more of them than the police on duty. One policeman from Savile Row Station saw Danny Kaye, the Marquess of Milford Haven, Lady Barnett and Sabrina in one afternoon. During the day the street even smells of wealth. It is unusual to walk more than a few yards without noticing the scent of an expensive perfume or cigar.

And at night . . .

At night Bond Street is quieter, but there are still perfumed women about, though the scents are less subtle. Few prostitutes use Bond Street itself, say the police, but some of the side streets are known "beats."

Bond Street, visited by wealthy tourists from all over the world, is something of a shock to most of them when they first see it. Unbelieving, they ask the passer-by: "Is *this* Bond Street? *The* Bond Street?"

They expect to see something outwardly impressive; but Bond Street is grimy, narrow and crowded.

It is not until one steps behind the façade that the real Bond Street takes shape. The interior of Hilhouse's, the hatters, is almost unchanged from the days when Charles Dickens lodged in the rooms over the shop.

With the slightest encouragement John Harman, the present owner, brings out a framed cheque for £6 3s. made out by Dickens to the firm.

"Bond Street is not what it was," Harman says, disgustedly, as he looks out of the shop window at the numerous hatless men passing in the street. "Half of them would not have been allowed in the street in the old days."

Like Hilhouse's, which was founded in 1799, many of the shops in Bond Street have been household words—in the "right" houses—for a century and a half or even longer.

In 1805, Lord Nelson, who lived at 150 New Bond Street, walked into Dollond and Aitchison's, the opticians, and bought a telescope. Atkinson's have sold perfumes from 24 Old Bond Street since 1832.

The aura of statelier times clings to many of the assistants in these old-established shops. Many of them seem more like family retainers.

Years of dealing with aristocratic and wealthy customers have taught Bond Street traders to accept the most extreme behaviour calmly. The manager of one of the most exclusive shoe shops recalls a distinguished-looking woman who walked in wearing a pair of their hand-made shoes. She had put them on without noticing that one of the soles was worn through, she said. She wanted them repaired while she waited.

The manager regretted that they did not have such a service. The woman insisted that it should be done. The manager explained that of course he would like to do it for her, but there were no facilities on the premises for carrying out repairs.

"Well, they are no use to me as they are. You can keep them," the woman said angrily. She took them off one at a time and hurled them at the crystal chandeliers. Then she stalked out into Bond Street in her nylons and hailed a taxi.

Salesmanship as such is frowned upon in Bond Street. There is no place for high-pressure methods. Publicity is regarded as a regrettable necessity, and even modest enthusiasm for one's goods is looked upon as being slightly vulgar.

Institutions such as Asprey's, where the Queen Mother or Princess Margaret may drop in, accompanied only by a detective, can afford to wait, to let the goods sell themselves by sheer quality.

In 1953 they made a forty-seven piece

£50,000 is the price she'll have to pay if she wants to wear this imagination of the ordinary shopper are commonplace in Bond Street. In

£2 5s. for a jar of skin cream? At Atkinson's that is pin money, for Bond Street customers use the world's best perfumes

£40,000 was the price of the "Coronation Plate" gold dessert service in 1953; it is now worth more. "We'll have no trouble selling it," say the makers, Asprey's

set of diamonds on view at Boucheron's. Prices which are beyond the one jeweller's workroom gold dust worth £500 is swept up every year

£561 was paid for this "run of the mill" collection of china at a Sotheby's auction. At one sale this autumn, seven Impressionist paintings fetched £781,000

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON AND LAWRENCE HANLEY

gold dessert service, which they named the "Coronation Plate." It was priced at £40,000. They still have it. "Of course, it has appreciated in value since then, but we'll certainly have no trouble selling it," asserts Eric Asprey.

Arthur Charatan, who sells rare amber, may see only a few customers in a week, and some of those may want nothing but a necklace restrung. Charatan, too, can afford to wait. "Almost every notability in the world has been in here," he says. One American bought £7,000 worth in half an hour.

Old Bond Street was built in 1686, by Sir Thomas Bond, who had made money by speculating in tenement property, and was comptroller to the household of Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I. New Bond Street was new in 1700.

From the first, Bond Street was popular with the "quality." Dean Swift, that eccentric genius, lived there. Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds founded the Literary Club at the old Clarendon Hotel in 1764. When Nelson lived at 150 New Bond Street, Lady Hamilton set up house at 147.

Chocolate surprise

According to tradition, it was Edward VII, as Prince of Wales, who persuaded two middle-aged women, Mesdames Charbonnel and Walker, to leave the Paris confectioner Voissier and come to Bond Street to set up a business of their own. The firm is still known as Charbonnel et Walker. Their handmade chocolates are supplied "to the Royal family and most of the peerage."

A ten pound box of these chocolates costs £6 10s. in a presentation pack. Albert German, manager of the firm, can recall only one order which caused him mild surprise. It came from an inmate of Winchester Gaol, and asked for a box of chocolates to be sent to his wife for her birthday.

The order was executed with the firm's traditional courtesy and dispatch. It came from an old customer. THE END

£7 10s. buys a silk hat moulded to fit the shape of your head at Hilhouse's, the hatters. Soft hats cost from £2 17s. 6d. to £3 7s. 6d. Charles Dickens once lived in rooms over the shop; it has changed little since

How we smashed the Germans at Alamein

Until Montgomery took command, the Eighth Army's spirits were low. But soon his men were fit and keen—to hit Rommel for six

Tea with a desert tank crew. Montgomery believed in being not only a leader but "a mascot"

Eighth Army troops—Montgomery calls them "truly

At dawn on August 11, 1942, I reached Gibraltar on my way to Cairo to take over command of the Eighth Army from General Auchinleck.

From what I read and heard, Rommel's forces consisted of holding troops who manned static defence positions and held vital areas of ground, and mobile troops for counter-attack and to form the spearhead of offensives. The holding forces consisted largely of Italians and were mostly unarmoured; the mobile forces were German and for the greater part armoured.

I came to the conclusion that the Eighth Army must have its own Panzer Army—a corps strong in armour, well-equipped and well-trained. It must never hold static fronts; it would be the spearhead of our offensives. Because of the lack of such a corps we had never done any lasting good. The formation of this corps of three or four divisions must be a priority task.

Then there was the question of morale. From what I had learned the troops had their tails down and there was no confidence in the higher command. This would have to be put right at once.

These thoughts, and many others, passed through my mind on the journey. I was not looking forward to my meeting with Auchinleck. I had heard certain things about his methods of command and knew that I could never serve happily under him. I also considered that he was a poor picker of men.

I arrived at an airfield outside Cairo early on August 12 and was driven to Middle East H.Q. Auchinleck took me into his map-room and shut the door; we were alone.

He asked me if I knew he was to go. I said that I did. He then explained to me his plan of operations; this was based on the fact that at all costs the Eighth Army was to be preserved "in being" and must not be destroyed in battle. If Rommel attacked in strength, as was expected soon, the Eighth Army would fall back on the delta; if Cairo and the delta could not be held, the army would retreat up the Nile, and another possibility was a withdrawal to Palestine.

Amazing plans

I listened in amazement to this exposition of his plans. I asked one or two questions, but I quickly saw that he resented any question directed to immediate changes of policy about which he had already made up his mind. So I remained silent.

He then said I was to go down to the desert the next day and spend two days at Eighth Army H.Q., getting into the picture and learning the game. He was himself still commanding the Eighth Army, and he had ordered Lieutenant-General Ramsden to act for him.

I was not to take over command till August 15, the day on which he would himself hand over to Alexander; he wished these two events to be simultaneous. In the event of an enemy attack, or of some crisis occurring, he himself would at once come to Eighth Army H.Q. and take direct command again from Ramsden. It all seemed most peculiar and I got out of the room as soon as I decently could.

I then went in search of Alexander: I soon found him in the headquarters, calm, confident and charming—as always.

I would like to make the point now, categorically, how lucky I was to have "Alex" as my C.-in-C. I could not have served under a better chief; we were utterly different, but I liked him and respected him as a man.

I at once put to him my plan for creating a reserve corps for the Eighth Army, strong in armour, similar to Rommel's. He agreed; but he was not yet C.-in-C. It was obviously useless to discuss the matter with Auchinleck or his chief of staff; they were both to go. So I went off to find the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Major-General (now Field-Marshal Sir John) Harding. He had been a student under me at the Camberley Staff College and I had the highest opinion of his ability.

I put the whole plan to him and asked if he could form the corps which I wanted from the bits and pieces scattered around Egypt; three hundred new Sherman tanks were due to arrive at Suez from America on September 3 and these would provide the equipment for the armoured divisions.

Into the desert

That evening, Harding said he could produce the corps we wanted. This would be 10 Corps and would consist of: the 1st Armoured Division, the 8th Armoured Division and the 10th Armoured Division, each of one armoured brigade, an infantry brigade and divisional troops; also a New Zealand Division — two infantry brigades and one armoured brigade.

This was splendid.

At 5 a.m. on August 13 I left Cairo by car for the desert.

The B.G.S. of the Eighth Army was Brigadier (now Major-General Sir Francis) de Guingand. "Freddie" de Guingand and I were old friends.

He looked thin and worried; he was obviously carrying a heavy burden. I realized at once it was essential to re-establish the former close friendship

Eleven days in the historic drama of Alamein. The breakout was a great victory for the British; for Rommel it was his first defeat . . .

magnificent material"—go into the attack. Their Alamein victory was the turning-point of the war

before tackling the main problem; so I made him get into my car and I talked about our past days together, and we had a good laugh over several episodes I recalled. He quickly became less tense and after a while I said: "Well, Freddie my lad, you chaps seem to have got things into a bit of a mess here. Tell me all about it."

He then produced a document which he had written for me, giving the situation and all the relevant facts. I said: "Now, Freddie, don't be silly. You know I never read any papers when I can get the person concerned to tell me himself. Put that bumf away and unburden your soul."

He laughed and I saw at once I would now get a first-class review of the present situation and the causes of it—with nothing held back.

The magnitude of the task in front of me was beginning to be apparent. I knew I could not tackle it alone; I must have someone to help me, a man with a quick and clear brain, who would accept responsibility, and who would work out the details and leave me free to concentrate on the major issues—in fact, a chief of staff who would handle all the detailed and intricate staff side of the business and leave me free to command.

Was Freddie de Guingand this man?

We were complete opposites; he lived on his nerves and was highly strung; in ordinary life he liked wine, gambling, and good food. Did these differences matter? I quickly decided they did not; indeed, differences were assets.

Before we arrived at Eighth Army H.Q. I had decided that de Guingand was the man.

I have never regretted that decision. Freddie de Guingand and I went through the rest of the war together. Wherever I went, he came as my chief of staff; we journeyed side by side from Alamein to Berlin.

I was quite cheerful when we arrived at the desert headquarters of the Eighth Army at about 11 a.m. The sight that met me was enough to lower anyone's morale. It was a desolate scene; a few trucks, no mess tents, work done mostly in trucks or in the open air in the hot sun, flies everywhere.

Maximum discomfort

I asked where Auchinleck used to sleep; I was told that he slept on the ground outside his caravan. Tents were forbidden in the Eighth Army; everyone was to be as uncomfortable as possible, so that they wouldn't be more comfortable than the men.

The acting Army Commander, Lieutenant-General Ramsden, met me. I knew him of old since he had commanded the Hampshire Regiment in my 8th Division in Palestine in 1938-39; he was a very good battalion commander in those days and I had not met him since. He explained the situation to me. I cross-examined him about the army plans for a withdrawal if Rommel attacked; certain orders had been issued about the withdrawal but they were indefinite. There was an air of uncertainty about everything in the operational line.

It was clear to me that the situation was quite unreal and, in fact, dangerous. I decided at once to take action. I had been ordered not to take over command of the Eighth Army till August 15; it was still only the thirteenth. I knew it was useless to consult G.H.Q. and that I must take full responsibility myself.

I told General Ramsden he was to return at once to his corps; he seemed surprised, as he had been placed in acting command of the army, but he went. I then had lunch, with the flies and in the hot sun.

During lunch I did some savage thinking. After lunch I wrote a telegram to G.H.Q. saying that I had assumed command of Eighth Army as from 2 p.m. that day, August 13; this was disobedience, but there was no come-back. I then cancelled all previous orders about withdrawal.

I issued orders that in the event of enemy attack there would be *no* withdrawal; we would fight on the ground we now held and if we couldn't stay there alive we would stay there dead.

I thought that was enough for the moment, until I had seen more of the ground and had met some of the subordinate commanders.

I spent the next day examining the ground and saw the importance of two dominating areas: the Ruweisat Ridge and the Alam Halfa Ridge. Both were important, but the key to the whole Alamein position was the Alam Halfa Ridge. This was several miles in rear of the Alamein Line and south-east from the Ruweisat Ridge; it was undefended, because there were no troops available.

I had pondered deeply over what I had heard about armoured battles in the desert and it seemed to me that what Rommel liked was to get our armour to attack him; he then disposed his own armour behind a screen of anti-tank guns, knocked out our tanks, and finally had the field to himself.

If Rommel attacked

I was determined that would not happen if Rommel decided to attack us before we were ready to launch a full-scale offensive against him. We would stand firm in the Alamein position, hold the Ruweisat and Alam Halfa Ridges, and let him beat up against them.

We would fight a static battle and my forces would not move; his tanks would come up against our tanks dug-in in hull-down positions at the western edge of the Alam Halfa Ridge.

I discussed the problem with de Guingand and we decided to ask G.H.Q. for the 44th Division to be sent to the Eighth Army *at once*, and to position it to hold the Alam Halfa Ridge. Once that ridge was securely held by a complete division, well dug in and properly supported by armour (not to be loosed), I really had not much more to bother about. I asked that another division, the 51st, should be sent to me later.

I decided to ask Alexander to get General Horrocks flown out from England at once to command the 13 Corps. I knew I could not have a better man

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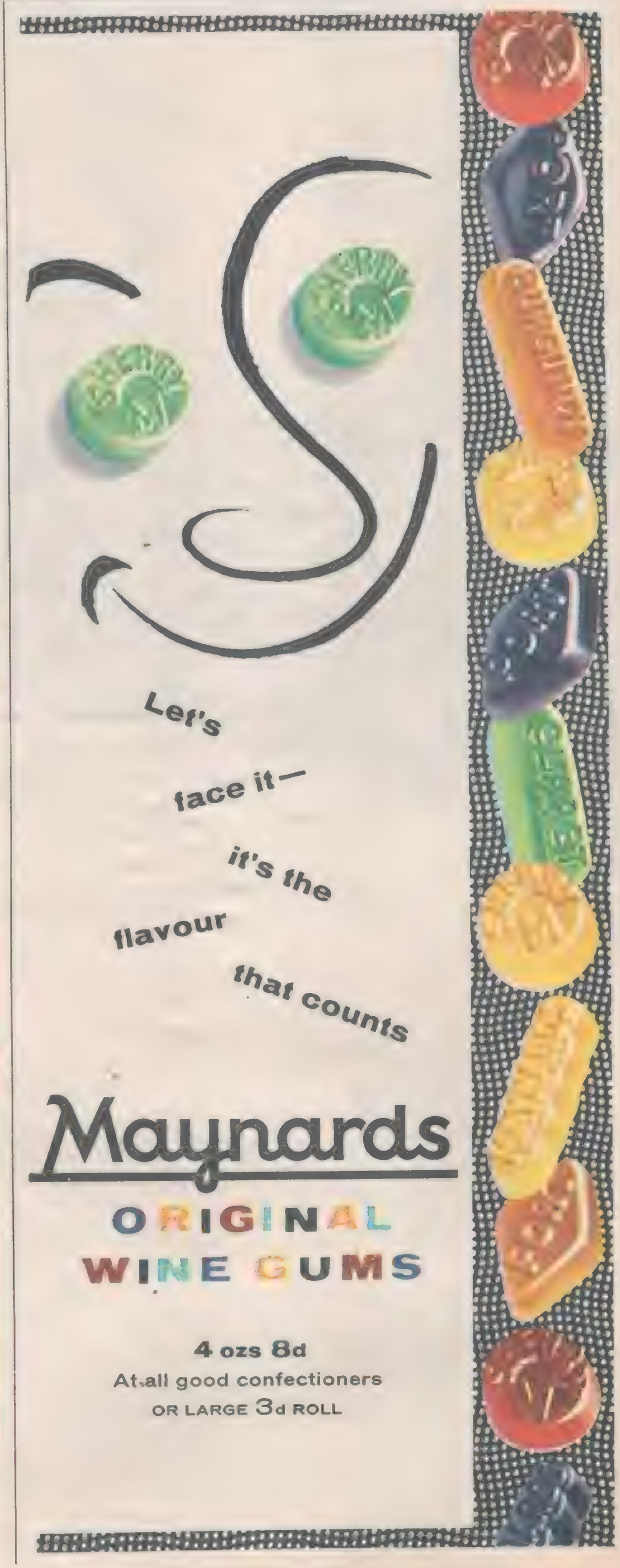

Montgomery

continued from page 17

and so it turned out; he was exactly what was wanted for the job which lay ahead.

And so by August 15, the day on which Auchinleck had ordered me to assume command of the Eighth Army, I had already been in command for two days and we had got things moving in the right direction.

The Prime Minister visited the Eighth Army on August 19 on his way back from Moscow. I took him round the front and explained to him my plans for defeating Rommel's expected attack and my ideas about our offensive.

Churchill's message

When he left the next day I asked him to sign my autograph book. He wrote this personal note. I had assumed command of the Eighth Army on August 13, the anniversary of the Battle of Blenheim.

> "May the anniversary of Blenheim which marks the opening of the new Command bring to the Commander of the Eighth Army and his troops the fame and fortune they will surely deserve.
>
> WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.
> 20th August, 1942."

I had taken command of truly magnificent material; it did not take me long to see that. The Eighth Army was composed of veteran fighting divisions. But officers and men were bewildered at what had happened and this had led to a loss of confidence. "Brave but baffled" the Prime Minister had called them.

This loss of confidence, combined with the bellyaching which went on and which was partly the cause of it, were becoming dangerous and could only be eradicated by a successful battle: a battle in which Rommel was defeated easily.

I could not myself attack; Rommel must provide that opportunity for me. But in order to reap the full benefit, I must correctly forecast the design of his expected attack and determine in advance how we would defeat it.

My intelligence staff were certain the "break-in" to our positions would be on the southern flank; this would be followed by a left wheel, his armoured forces being directed on the Alam Halfa and Ruweisat Ridges. I agreed, and my plans were based on this forecast.

I decided to hold the Alam Halfa Ridge strongly with the 44th Division and to locate my tanks just south of its western end. Once I was sure that the enemy main thrust was being directed against the Alam Halfa Ridge, I planned to move the armour to the area between the west of the ridge and the New Zealand positions in the main Alamein line. I was so sure that this movement of my own armour would take place that I ordered it to be actually rehearsed; and when it *did* take place on the morning of September 1, I had some four hundred tanks in position, dug in, and deployed behind a screen of six-pounder anti-tank guns.

Rommel attacks

It was obvious to me that Rommel could not just by-pass my forces and go off eastwards to Cairo; if he did so, I could have descended on his rear with four hundred tanks and that would have been the end of his army.

I then decided that my extreme south flank should be mobile; the 7th Armoured Division would hold a wide front and, as the attack came, would give way before it. When the attack swung left-handed towards the Alam Halfa Ridge, the 7th Armoured Division would harry it from the east and south, and generally "shoot it up."

The design of Rommel's attack was exactly as had been forecast; we fought the battle as I had laid down.

Rommel's attack came on the night of August 31. I had gone to bed at my usual time and was asleep when the attack began soon after midnight. De Guingand tells his own story about that night. He decided he should wake me up and tell me the news; he said I merely replied, "Excellent, couldn't be better," and went to sleep again at once, and had breakfast at the usual time in the morning.

The Eighth Army consisted in the main of civilians in uniform, not of professional soldiers. And they were, of course, to a man, civilians who read newspapers. It seemed to me that to command such men demanded not only a guiding mind but also a point of focus: or to put it another way, not only a master but a mascot.

I started in the Alam Halfa battle by wearing an Australian hat, first of all because it was an exceedingly good hat for the desert, but soon because I came to be recognized by it; outside the Australian lines, anyway! Later, as readers may know, I took a black beret, again for utilitarian reasons in the first place.

And the twin badges in the beret were, in origin, accidental; but I quickly saw their functional result, and what started as a private joke with the tank regiment which gave it to me became in the end the means by which I came to be recognized throughout the desert.

I soon learned that the arrival of the double-badged beret on the battlefield was a help—they knew that I was about, that I was taking an intense and personal interest in their doings, and that I was not just sitting about somewhere safe in the rear issuing orders. The beret was functional in the way a "brass hat" could never have been. It became, if you like, my signature. It was also very comfortable.

Leese flies out

I had to have three first-class corps commanders. I had one for 13 Corps in Horrocks. I decided it was necessary to replace Ramsden in 30 Corps and I asked for Major-General Sir Oliver Leese, who was commanding the Guards Armoured Division in England. He was flown out at once and I never regretted that choice.

After long consultation with Alexander I agreed to give 10 Corps, my *corps d'élite* which was to resemble Rommel's Panzer Army, to Lumsden; he had commanded the 1st Armoured Division in the desert and was highly spoken of in Middle East circles.

The basic problem that confronted us after the Battle of Alam Halfa was a difficult one. We were face to face with Rommel's forces between the sea and the Qattara Depression, a distance of about forty-five miles. The enemy was strengthening his defences to a degree previously unknown in the desert, and these included deep and extensive minefields. There was no open flank.

It seemed almost impossible to conceal from the enemy the fact that we intended to launch an attack. I decided to plan for tactical surprise, and to conceal from the enemy the exact places where the blows would fall and the exact times. This would involve a great deception plan.

Next, a full moon was necessary. The minefield problem was such that the troops must be able to see what they were doing.

Full moon was October 24. I said I would attack on the night of October 23, and notified Alexander accordingly.

I was watching the training carefully and it was becoming apparent to me that the Eighth Army was very untrained. By the end of September there were serious doubts in my mind whether the troops would be able to do what was being demanded.

The moment I saw what might happen I took a quick decision. On October 6, just over two weeks before the battle was to begin, I changed the plan. My initial plan had been based on destroying Rommel's armour; the remainder of his army, the unarmoured portion, could then be dealt with at

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Did you know you're a walking clock?

by Dr. BRIAN ANSON

It often happens that a weekend walker, out for a brisk morning's exercise, finds that he has forgotten to take his watch with him. On his way home he may think to himself: *It must be getting on for lunchtime.* Sure enough, he walks into his house just as the one o'clock news is beginning.

His stomach knew the time.

There is nothing really remarkable in this. Lots of people can go to bed at night, tell themselves to wake at 7 a.m. —and do it. They don't need an alarm clock.

But how is it done? Dr. William Goody, an expert on the nervous system, says that we have a number of natural "clocks" inside us.

Many elderly people have hands that shake. Timing these tremors will show that there are ten to the second. Young people who are worried, or patients with over-active thyroids, tremble at exactly the same rate.

The electro-encephalograph is an instrument which records the small electric currents given off by the brain. When a person is resting with his eyes shut it shows a regular discharge of impulses, called alpha waves, and they, too, occur at the rate of ten to the second, which is a fundamental speed of nervous activity.

But the nervous system can appreciate much more rapid rhythms than this. The ear can pick out sound waves over a range of fifty to 50,000 a second, and identify them as notes of different pitch.

Such fine time measurements are seldom needed in everyday life. Most people can subconsciously judge the passing of a few minutes by their pulse beat and their rate of breathing.

Emotional speed-up

For any individual these are remarkably constant as a rule. Though they speed up when the person is excited or takes exercise, they soon return to a perfect regularity, which may be seventy-two to the minute for the pulse and fifteen to the minute for breathing.

If it is necessary to note the passage of hours rather than minutes, digestion is the guide. Two hours after food has been eaten, the stomach finishes digesting it and passes it on to the intestine, which empties every twenty-four hours.

Body temperature, if recorded carefully every half-hour, would be found to be at its lowest at dawn and to rise steadily towards evening, then slowly to sink again. Some people are at their best in the morning and some at night, partly because they are more efficient at certain temperatures.

Taking even longer periods of time, an expectant mother has nine months to wait for her baby. And that baby has eighteen years in which to grow to adult size.

Here is another way to look at it. The amateur gardener, digging in his allotment, throws down his spade after a time and needs a rest. But the professional will go on all day. He seems slower, but he gets more done—because he has learned the right rhythm, which he can keep up indefinitely. A practised hiker walks at a speed that he can keep up all day.

The reason is that human muscles need definite rest pauses. If they get the right pause they recover completely before the next effort, but if the pauses are too infrequent or too short the muscle does not have time to recover and soon becomes fatigued.

Ready reckoning

So, with experience, a person can tell approximately how long it will take to walk a mile or dig a rod of ground.

The whole of this system of internal clocks is regulated by the brain and nervous system, for all nerves are accurate timekeepers.

It takes only a hundredth of a second for an impulse to go along one metre of nerve—a fiftieth of a second to realize that you have stubbed your toe, but only a two-thousandth of a second to know that you have grit in your eye.

The necessity of all this has only recently been appreciated by physiologists. It has always been obvious that we needed our ordinary five senses to get about the world and know what we are doing. We must see, hear, touch, smell and taste to identify what is around us.

But the time we take to do things is as important as being able to see and handle things. In the act of walking, one leg must be raised while the other is on the ground, and the accurate timing of the movements of both legs is vital.

Lifting food to our lips must be timed to coincide with opening our mouths—unless we are to receive a custard pie in the face like a slapstick comedian.

Normally all these actions are performed subconsciously, timed to a fraction by our bodily clocks.

So anyone who is able to rise at a given time in the morning without the aid of an alarm clock need not think he is exceptional. He is not. He is just a regular fellow. THE END

Great feet it had—and it walked in the night. No wonder Miss Dodman was terrified

The MACKENHAM MONSTER

by CLIVE BURNLEY

ILLUSTRATED BY OLIVER BRABBINS

STROMBOLI, the French clown, was a featherweight type of man. In the street he was totally inconspicuous in the smallest crowd. In the circus ring, in the slick silliness of his solo act—that hilarious mixture of acrobatics, mime, slack-wire capers and fire-eating—he was a different proposition entirely. In a snowed-up Berkshire lane on the chilly side of midnight, he was something else again.

After the Christmas show in London, he came to Mackenham to the winter quarters of Johnny Roxo's circus at Coldash Farm. A number of other circus personalities were there. Roxo was resting in his three-roomed flat in the farmhouse, and beside Stromboli's bachelor caravan in the paddock were the mobile homes of the Leaping Lincolns, the Van de Marcos, the Six Sundheims and Zig-Zog himself.

All the unlikely ingredients of what came to be known as the Mackenham mystery were thus brought together. Perhaps the oddest of all were the Feet. Stromboli had picked them up two years earlier in Munich. Once they had belonged to Loco, the famous Austrian clown.

They were made of pale pink rubber with scarlet bunions; you put them on by thrusting a foot into a slipper in their padded interior and lacing them up above the ankle under the trousers. They had ten enormous toes, and from the big one to the heel measured exactly twenty-four

inches. Now he had time on his hands Stromboli dug them out of his brass-bound cabin trunk and looked at them.

And then it snowed.

Every so many years England is buried and bowled over by a blizzard. Drifts choke the roads, power lines fall down, pipes freeze up, and buses, if they travel at all, do so sideways. Villages like Mackenham are invariably cut off; that is to say, they are forced to exist for several days without the twice-daily bus service or the retail baker's van. So it was now; for thirty-two hours snowflakes fell in countless quadrillions.

The day they stopped falling, Stromboli sat in his van with its tiled coal fireplace and gentle radio music, trying on the big feet and occasionally glancing out of his lozenge-paned window at the sub-polar world. Snow had some sort of magic for him; as a boy in *Hautes-Pyrénées* it had been his delight. He saw the odd little arrow heads that birds' claws left upon it, appropriately dainty signatures. How differently the big feet would crunch down the snow, what deeply-satisfying prints they would leave!

No sooner had the thought occurred to him than he stepped outside to try it. Sure enough; he made a great giant's mark, such a sign of Man Friday as would have sent Crusoe running back in terror to the shelter of his cave.

Stromboli went thoughtfully back to his fireside and made himself some coffee.

That night, after dark, Stromboli walked through the soft snow, in his twenty-four inch feet, a full seven miles; over ditch and furrow, through deserted streets, across frozen streams. The big feet made excellent snowshoes.

The Mackenham mystery had been created.

Among the first to see the astonishing results of that night's handiwork was Oliver Jeavons, the rising historical novelist, who was then living a solitary life of literary endeavour at Sugarloaf Cottage on Croake Hill. Not an entirely solitary life, however. He had been fortunate enough to employ as his secretary quiet little Miss Dodman, who came to Sugarloaf Cottage every day from her parents' home in Mackenham and took down the current melodrama of Regency roguery from the author's dictation.

Early that morning Oliver had opened his door to see if the milkman had managed to fight his way through the blizzard. There were no milk bottles on his step. But what *was* there, very clear in the snow, showing the mark of all its great toes, was a footprint twenty-four inches long. It was one of many; they came in at the gate, circled round the sundial, crossed the step and went off in the direction of Thunderley Wood.

Oliver stared at them for many minutes, then came inside with a creased forehead and a very cold tip to his nose and locked and bolted his door.

About half an hour later he unlocked it for Miss Dodman.

"I ran all the way," she said. "Oh, Mr. Jeavons, have you heard? There's been an Abominable Snowman or something rushing all over Mackenham in the night. He's even been over your own doorstep."

"I know—I saw the marks."

"All over the village," went on Miss Dodman, "there are those awful footprints. They go right round the Red Lion, right down the High Street and in and out among the gravestones in the churchyard. Oh, Mr. Jeavons, whatever can it mean?"

"Perhaps it's a sort of practical joke."

"But how could it be? There's no sign of anyone walking along making the marks, only just the tracks themselves."

"It's very odd," agreed Oliver.

"It's frightening," said Beryl Dodman. "You never saw such excitement in the village. Shall I make some coffee?"

"A very good idea," said Oliver. "Somehow I don't feel much like work this morning."

While they were drinking the coffee Tim Kendal phoned. Tim was a journalist friend of Oliver's. Just now he was ringing up such of his up-country friends as hadn't had their telephone wires blown down on the off-chance of collecting a few cold-weather stories. This time he was fortunate indeed.

"We haven't only got snow," Oliver told him. "We've got snowmen."

A few minutes later Tim said: "Get out the camp bed. I'm coming down."

"But we're cut off."

"I'll get there," said Tim.

And he did. He arrived just as Miss Dodman was preparing to leave. He was exhausted and bedraggled. Oliver looked him out dry clothes and fed him brandy and aspirin; Miss Dodman made hot drinks and energy-restoring snacks.

When she thought again of going home it was quite dark, very cold and beginning once more to snow; nor was anybody certain what other perils the night might hold. So Oliver phoned her parents to say she would stay the night.

Later on Beryl Dodman prepared some sort of dinner from the limited stock of food in the cottage; a lash-up of pork chops, skinless sausages, and other oddments, and it was over this haphazard meal that Tim Kendal first put bone into the loose flesh of the Mackenham mystery. He was certain he knew what had made the gigantic footprints.

"A yeti," he said. "What they call an Abominable Snowman."

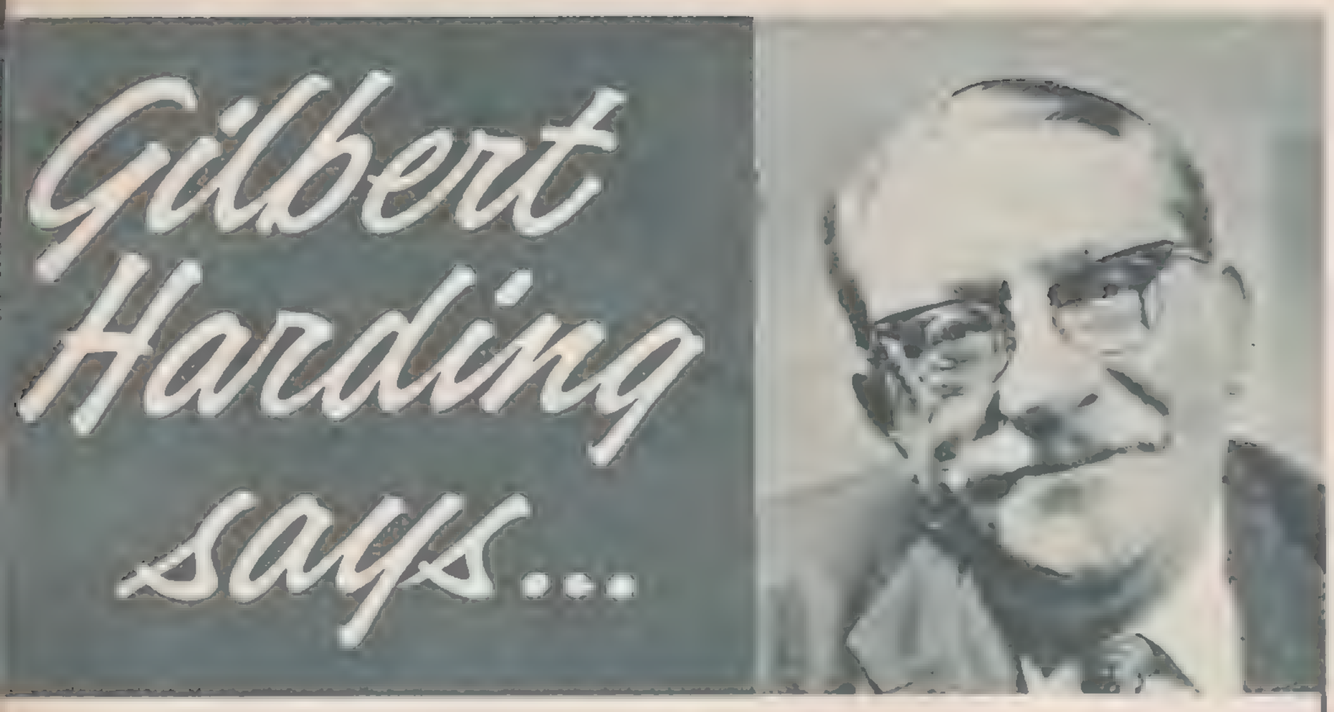
Oliver protested: "This isn't Nepal."

"No," said Tim, "it isn't Africa, either. But all the same there are lions not two miles away from us. They'd make pretty surprising tracks in the snow, too, if they got out."

"I suppose they would. You mean the circus over at Coldash Farm."

"Exactly," agreed Tim. "And not just any circus, but Johnny Roxo's circus. He's the fellow who brings in the Moscow acts and works on all sides of all curtains. If he can show us snake-headed women from the Amazon and the only trained gorilla in the world, what's so difficult about a snowman from the Himalayas?"

"But they couldn't get a thing like



If this is muddle, let's have more of it

I AM a Roman Catholic, but that is no earthly reason why I should be expected to know why Pope Pius XII left Vatican affairs in such a muddle.

Yet I have been asked that question more times than I like, and I expect many other people, who share my faith, have had the same experience.

It's no use beating around the bush. When Pope Pius XII died there were many vacancies in the Sacred College of Cardinals and they have now been quickly filled. For fourteen years he did not make an appointment to the vacant, important office of Secretary of State.

I agree that seems remarkable in a pope, born of a noble family for many generations in the service of the Vatican, who was himself a servant of the Holy See for nearly all his long and active life. Why did he neglect the Vatican machinery?

Well, I have found the answer to that one in six simple words I came across in a new book, published this week by Evans Brothers—*Guide For Living*, a selection of His Holiness's addresses and letters.

"In God's design, people come first," declares Pius XII.

How I wish that all the bureaucrats, sipping tea in town halls and Whitehall offices and passing pieces of paper from "in" trays to "out," would set up those six words on their walls in six-inch letters where all could see them.

The human touch

It might help them to realize that they are not dealing with, say, Housing, but with flesh and blood housewives who dearly and desperately want homes of their own.

They betray their fish-cold detachment when they talk about "units of accommodation" when they mean homes, and call your children such horrible names as "borderline moderns" and "marginal grammars."

They lose sight of real people under mountains of paper. Pope Pius XII never did that.

No pope was more accessible; too accessible some of his cardinals thought.

If he were talking to a gnarled and troubled peasant from the Abruzzi and the time came for an appointment with a cardinal who had travelled all the way from China, it was the cardinal who was made to wait.

Pope Pius XII was prepared to see everybody: Generals Montgomery and Mark Clark were always popping into the Vatican when they were in Rome during the war; he gave one of his last audiences to film star Alec Guinness.

All were welcome, the faithful and the curious, Indians, Eskimoes, ballet dancers, racing cyclists, deep-sea fishermen, even Dr. Grantley Dick-Read, in spite of his controversial views on childbirth.

At his very first audience, in 1939, Pope Pius XII astonished the prelates in attendance by walking right down into the throng. That was about as surprising as would be the sight of the Queen, on her way to Parliament, stepping out of her coach to talk to some women with prams at the corner of Whitehall. Pope Pius was undoubtedly the Pope of the People.

He made an enormous impression upon those who were privileged to see him. I remember interviewing for an overseas radio programme in 1950 two old ladies from a small town in Australia, a town like Alice, who were passing through London on their way back from Rome, where they had seen the Pope.

Alas, rarely does an interviewer draw a phrase that is not utterly banal and as heavy as lead from his victim. This time I struck gold. The Pope, one woman said, "was like an alabaster lamp lit up inside."

Though he was never interested in numbers, only in individual men and women, His Holiness granted audience to a million or more people.

Often these audiences were very informal. The late Pope was prepared, at the drop of a biretta, to talk to anybody about anything: beekeeping to the Syndicate of Apiculturists from Ancona, plumbing to a visiting delegation of sanitary engineers from Pisa.

He particularly delighted in talking to racing cyclists. One cyclist turned up at the Vatican when His Holiness was at his summer residence at Castel Gandolfo. "Get on your bicycle," came a special message, "and ride as hard as you can. The Holy Father is waiting for you."

This overwhelming interest in ordinary people, this enviable capacity even to suffer fools gladly, took up a lot of time. That might have been excused if Pope Pius had possessed the ability to delegate authority.

But, it seems, he did not. He was a modern pope. I learn from this new book that he used a white portable typewriter for his letters—although never for prayers. But he did not see, or would not see, that delegation of routine tasks is both an art and a necessity, today, even for a pope.

So, perhaps, affairs did get into a bit of a muddle. Well, what of it? I believe that Pope Pius XII (and this new book bears me out) held up to all the rubber-stamp men, all the official bullies in uniform, and all the chairborne consumers of paper, a challengingly different sense of values.

Men matter much more than the machinery of government. "In God's design, people come first."

From Pope Pius XII nobody was sent empty away.

The Mackenham monster

continued from previous page

that into the country without somebody knowing."

"They have ways," Tim declared. "Did you ever hear of circus animals pining away in quarantine?"

"But if something like that had escaped, surely they'd raise an alarm?"

"Roxo wouldn't spoil his big sensation by letting a cat like this out of its bag too soon, if he could help it," said Tim.

"But I can't really believe. . . ."

"A fantastic story's got to have a fantastic explanation. Anyway, first thing tomorrow I'm going over to Coldash Farm. Care to come?"

"All right," agreed Oliver.

OLIVER slept, or tried to sleep that night, on his camp bed in the little downstairs living-room. He was not cast in such an heroic mould as the heroes of his own romances, and he was acutely aware in the middle watches of the night that only nine inches of brickwork separated him from whatever horrific night prowlers there might be. But he told himself that it was all over, that Roxo had certainly recaptured his giant mountain ape, that there would be no new twenty-four inch footprints in his garden next morning.

And he was right; there was none.

But there were plenty elsewhere; slap down the middle of Marlow Street, spiralling over the war memorial recreation ground, across the footbridge over the Meckbourne, through the rickyard at Drury Farm, and for a mile and a quarter down the Staplesford Road, playfully passing each successive telephone pole on the opposite hand. It was quite ridiculous.

That morning, also, the news began to break; Tim's story had a fair prominence in his paper under the two-column head: BIG FEET BEWILDER BERKS.

Leaving Miss Dodman to rustle up another scratch meal, Tim and Oliver went down to Coldash Farm. They had some trouble locating Roxo and in the meantime spoke to several others, among them Stromboli, who had just come back from hearing local gossip in the private bar of the Red Lion.

Stromboli shrugged his shoulders. "Feet preents?" he said. "I guess some seely fellow walk around by night-time in rubber feet-gloves, like a joke, eh?"

Roxo at last gave them drinks at the farmhouse. He was a dark-jowled slab of a man with great moustaches. "Sure I have new things in my animal cages," he said. "Always I have new things. No, it is not possible you see them; you maybe frighten my lions. These footmarks? But I can tell you nothing: why should I know about those; I only know that I like nice free publicity, just when I am not showing, as well; very fine—you write whatever you like about Roxo, as long as you write about Roxo. Have a cigar."

AND they got no farther, but Tim had new evidence to support his case, inasmuch as it had now been proved that the footprints had come from the general direction of Coldash and appeared to have returned there.

Tim examined the latest trails, then telephoned his second story, boldly placing before the public the Abominable Snowman hypothesis.

From that point the story built up. Tim was not long alone in the field. That very afternoon two other pressmen and a TV camera team reached Mackenham, and next day, after the road from Staplesford had been bulldozed clear, others began to arrive in dozens. The story was given full coverage in the press. TERRIFIED VILLAGERS BOLT DOORS, THE MACKENHAM MONSTER, THE THING IN BERKSHIRE, THE SNOWMAN COMETH, the headlines read.

A few villagers with lively imaginations or a weakness for free liquor found it impossible always to give negative answers to the questions continually being asked of them; Mrs. Hepsworthy told her story of the dark shape with horns and a tail she had seen in her orchard, Jake Lucus testified to unearthly noises in the night, young Dick Twist claimed to have been chased by a sort of hairy Tarzan.

But in the meantime, before all these developments had fully taken place, the Mackenham Mystery had reached a personal climax for Oliver Jeavons. On the afternoon following their visit to Roxo's headquarters, Oliver was temporarily able to put the matter far enough out of his mind to complete, with Miss Dodman's help, the chapter he was working on. He knew Miss Dodman felt bound, this night at least, to return to her parents' home, but he was so lost in his narrative that darkness had long fallen by the time she was ready to leave.

THERE was no help for it; with some misgivings Oliver put on his duffel coat and set out to escort the girl back to the village. They found the nearer stretch of road hard underfoot, but lower down the hill it was still choked by drifts and they had to walk on the banks with the shadowy ambush of Thunderley Wood on their left hand.

Oliver was tense and jumpy. As they reached the outbuildings of Loxley Farm, a large black shadow detached itself from the hedgerow and stood before him. Without a moment's hesitation Oliver knocked it down. He had never done such a thing before.

"Hold on, sir!" said Luke Toogood, the tractor driver, getting to his feet.

A clip on the jaw was no more than a gnat bite to Luke, even if it did make him lose his balance. He had seen them approaching and thought he might as well have company into the village, that was all; for while Luke would back himself against anything in the welter bracket, he wasn't quite so confident about Abominable Snowmen.

Luke left them at the Red Lion and Oliver took Miss Dodman on to the gate of her home in Bell Lane. She thanked him prettily; apologized for dragging him out on such an awful night when heaven knew what terrible things might be prowling.

"Oh, it was nothing," Oliver told her airily.

"I know it's nothing to you, Mr. Jeavons," she said, the glow of a street lamp shining in her eyes, "you're so strong and brave."

This was the headiest sort of compliment to pay to a man who all his life had suffered from the belief that he was neither. For the second time that night, Oliver ran counter to all personal precedent and, in a sudden rush of pride and relief and affection for the cause of it all, he kissed Miss Dodman.

"Oh, Oliver!" she cried, clinging to him. . . .

But at last he had to return alone through the night to his cottage.

Once clear of the village, in the blurred black and white daub of a landscape, Oliver felt quite disgustingly afraid. He began to appreciate the value of Miss Dodman. Had she been with him, she would have believed him brave as a lion even if he had screamed in terror; but he would not have done so, because her illogical belief would have made him brave. Soon he had made up his mind to marry her.

Oliver was not the only prowler that night; there were some twenty-four others. The villagers had decided no longer to skulk at night behind

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COMPANIONS—I

We are more liable to catch the vices than the virtues of our companions.

Denis Diderot

THE LAND GOD GAVE TO CAIN

by

Hammond Innes

LAKE OF THE LION

It was a grim secret we found on that icy shore. For it was there that a gold-crazed man had run amok

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

SOMEWHERE ahead of us, in the wastes of Labrador, lay Lake of the Lion. I had come thousands of miles to find out if two men were still alive there.

The men were Briffe and Baird. They were members of an aerial survey team. When their plane crashed, the pilot, Laroche, trekked out with the news that the other two were dead.

I didn't believe him. I suspected he had abandoned them. But everyone I approached seemed anxious to hush the whole thing up.

At last I managed to organize a search party: myself; Laroche; Ray Darcy, an engineer on the new Labrador railway; and Briffe's daughter Paule, who was engaged to Laroche.

We trekked for five days through the wilds—and every day I grew more suspicious of Laroche. I knew he was trying to lead us astray.

On the fifth night he slipped out of camp alone. Tense with excitement, I gave chase, and shouted to him to stop. . . .

FINAL INSTALMENT

THAT bleak little lake with the snow falling softly—it might have been the lake where Laroche had abandoned Briffe and Baird. My knees were trembling as I stood there, facing him. But his gaze went past me. "Where are Paule and Ray?" he asked. "Are they following, too?"

I shook my head.

His dark eyes came back to me. "Just you—alone?" And when I nodded, he seemed to relax. "I guess you saw me leave the camp, eh?" He swore softly to himself. "Well, you'd better go back to them now. Try and persuade them to wait there for me. I'll be about two days."

"Where are you going?" I demanded.

"That's my business," he retorted.

And then, suddenly reckless, I said: "You ran out on Briffe when he was still alive, scared at what had happened. Isn't that the truth?"

His gaze shifted to the ground. "You're so damned logical, aren't you?" It was said without any trace of hostility. And then he murmured: "Well, it's true—in a way. I was scared. If I told you history had repeated itself there at that lake, then you'd think I'd gone mad, wouldn't you? But I'll tell you this much—that Indian was right. It's a bad place."

"Then it *was* Lake of the Lion?"

"Sure it was Lake of the Lion. The place where my grandfather killed yours. The body's still there. A heap of bones—that's all that's left of James Finlay Ferguson, and there's a hole drilled in the skull where the bullet struck him. Pierre Laroche must have come up behind him and shot him in cold blood." His eyes stared at me unblinkingly. "It's not a pretty thing to discover that your grandfather was a murderer."

"Forget our grandfathers," I heard myself say. "What happened there between you and Briffe?"

"Oh no," he said. "I'm not telling you that. Or what happened to Baird. But you can come and see it for yourself, if you want to."

"You're going to Lake of the Lion now?"

"But of course." He said it with

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Lake of the Lion

continued from previous page

impatience. "Where else did you think I was going?"

"But you're going south."

"South—yes." He nodded. "I have to pick up my route out."

"But you told us that was to the north."

He shrugged. "What does it matter what I told you? If you come with me, you can see for yourself what happened to Baird—and Briffe. I told you they were injured in the crash because I didn't want you to pursue your inquiries. Nobody was injured in the crash."

I hesitated, horrified at the thought of going on alone with him. My only hope was that Darcy and Paule, by following the Indian's instructions, would reach Lake of the Lion first.

"You'd better come with me anyway," Laroche said. "If you go back, you'll talk, and the one person who must never know what happened there is Paule."

It surprised me that, in his state of mind, he should still care what Paule thought. "They'll wonder what's happened to us," I said.

He shook his head. "I left a note. They'll guess you're with me." And he added. "I hope to God she does what I asked and stays at that camp. Okay, let's go. You lead the way."

As I went past him, the muscles of my shoulders contracted in anticipation of a blow, even though my intelligence told me that he was now determined to take me to Lake of the Lion.

Soon the timber fell away and I stood looking out over the same flat country that we'd come through the previous day, now white with snow.

"I've come back here to pick up my landmark," Laroche explained. . . .

THEN began a nightmare journey that lasted two whole days. No sooner had we started back into the rock country than it came on to snow again.

We camped miserably that night, and the cold next morning was very severe. But the snow was hard and the going easier. We skirted two frost-rimmed lakes and shortly after ten came to a big expanse of water, curved like a bow, with the ends lost in the trees that stood thick along its banks. That was when I suggested turning back. I felt that if we didn't, neither of us would get out alive.

"Listen!" Laroche was staring northwards. "Sounds like the falls." He sank down on to his hands and knees and bent his ear close to the water. "Yeah, it's falls all right." He got to his feet and stood staring along the shore. "I guess there's more water now than when I crossed here before."

"What's it matter?" I asked. "We certainly can't cross a river where there are falls." And then, because I was too exhausted to care any more, I said, "I'm turning back now."

BUT he was already wading into the water and, rather than be left alone, I followed. The cold shock of the water made me catch my breath at the same moment that Laroche shouted something. I thought for a moment he was in difficulties, for he was now waist deep in the water, but he was standing stock still, staring at the farther bank. He shouted again. "Paule! Paule!" Then he went plunging forward.

I didn't hesitate then, but followed him, not caring any longer how cold the water was or how deep. Paule was here, and Darcy would be with her. I shouldn't be alone with him any more.

Laroche scrambled out and climbed the rocks that fringed the shore. There was no sign of the others and, when I came up out of the water, I found him alone, standing over the dying embers of a fire.

"You saw them," I gasped. "Where are they?"

He shook his head. "No, I didn't see them."

"But you called out to Paule."

"I saw the smoke. They must be ahead of us." His teeth were chattering. "I didn't think they could possibly get here ahead of us." He was almost crying.

"But how do you know?" I cried. "If you didn't see them. . . ."

"The fire," he said.

I stared down at it, and I knew that he must be right, because there was nobody within five days' march of us, except Paule and Darcy.

By then my own teeth were chattering and I could feel my clothes stiffening as they froze. A numbness was creeping through my body. "I'll get the fire going again," I said.

"No. No, I got to get on. I got to catch up with them before they reach the lake." He started forward.

"You damned crazy fool!" I shouted after him. "You'll die of cold if you don't get dry."

But he went straight on, half running, and there was nothing for it but to follow him.

WE went on for a long time, until suddenly the ground fell away and through the bare poles of the trees I caught a glimpse of more water. A moment later I stumbled out of the timber on to an outcrop, and there was the island of rock, crouched like a lion in the middle of the lake. I stopped and stared at it, hardly able to believe my eyes. I had reached Lake of the Lion.

"Paule!" Laroche's despairing cry came up to me through the trees.

He was running down the steep timbered slope towards the lake, and beyond his bobbing figure I caught the glint of metal. It was the floatplane in which he, Briffe and Baird had crashed. It lay with its wings sprawled along the ice at the water's edge. And, to the right of it, two figures stood against the black bulk of some rocks overlooking the water.

"Paule!" That cry, so full of fear and despair, rose crazily up to me again, and, as though it had galvanized the two figures into action, one of them detached itself from the other and went scrambling down towards the half-sunken aircraft. It was Paule.

Then Darcy started after her, and he was calling to her, a cry of warning. No doubt he thought Laroche, in his demented state, might be dangerous. It was my own immediate thought, for the floatplane was evidence that he'd lied, and I went racing down the slope, shouting to her to stay with Darcy.

It's a wonder I didn't break my neck on that hillside, for it was a tangle of roots, but I reached the lake

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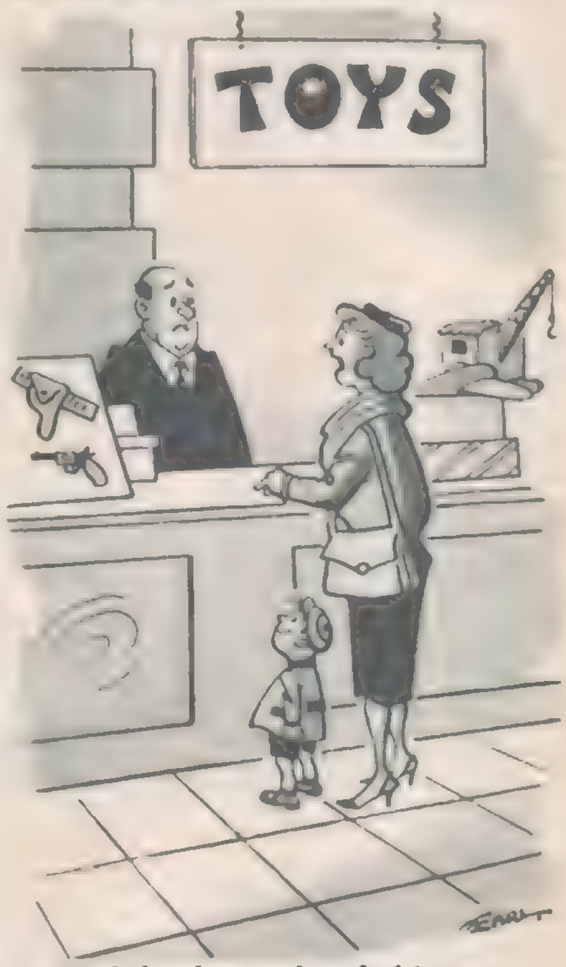

"With his last unbreakable toy he broke all his other toys . . ."

Enjoy this magic

Let yourself go with the enchantment of rainbow colours and tinsel glitter

EVERY Christmas we bring down the battered box of decorations from the attic. Some of its contents now rank as family heirlooms; others are recent additions. Each season we throw away a few well-worn paper chains and add new baubles, home-made or bought at the last minute to give the decorations a new look.

Christmas is a traditional time and it's fun to have the old familiar symbols festooned around the house, reminding us of Christmases when the children were small and almost unbearably excited by the festive goings-on. But too much tradition can be boring. When it comes to Christmas decorations something old and something new is the happiest combination.

Sprigs of holly behind the pictures may once have seemed immensely gay; but today they are not enough. For years we have been assimilating from abroad ideas new to us, though often traditional in the countries from which they come. Many of the materials used abroad can now be bought here. These can give our own decorations a new twist.

Countryside cheer

If you live in the country, decoration is easy. A few long walks through fields and hedgerows will yield enough berried holly, trails of ivy and decorative fir-cones for any household. Decorating with greenery has become easier this year, because there is a new way of preserving branches with a weak solution of Polycell wallpaper adhesive. Make the solution in a large basin and dip small sprays completely—brush larger ones over with a big distemper brush. This will prevent leaves and berries shrivelling or dropping, and also applies to the needles of Christmas trees.

To make the hall look welcoming, make an enormous ball of holly by sticking a dozen or so sprigs of even length with lots of leaves and berries into a large potato and hanging it (above hair level) inside the front door. If you touch up the edges of some of the leaves with silver paint it will look even prettier. Another hall idea is to remove your usual lampshade and substitute a big star—either made of woven raffia, Finnish fashion, if you are clever, or cardboard, painted gold with holes punched in it, if you aren't.

If you have apple trees in the garden, and you catch the apples in time, you can make specially decorated ones for Christmas tables. This is really a tip for next year, as all the apples will have been picked by now. When the fruit is fully grown, but has not yet started to colour, stick shapes of reindeer, Santa Claus or a Christmas angel with a pretty border, all made of silver foil, to the sides of the biggest and most beautiful apples. When they ripen, the figures or patterns are left in a whitish green colour, while the rest of the apple is red.

Town dwellers, who are not so well catered for and jealously guard each holly berry, can make their homes look festive in other ways, with token pieces of holly here and there. On the next page there are some sketches of suggestions for wall decorations that are different. When you hang these up the best way is to use X-hooks or long-pronged drawing pins. These will do least harm to decorations. Sticky tape, if it is left up for a few weeks, sometimes takes the surface off the wall.

Town houses, with front doors and windows on the street, have a double duty—to themselves and friends inside the house, and to passers-by outside. A big holly wreath, tied with a red ribbon and hung American style on the knocker, makes the whole street look Christmasy, and a lighted model crib in the window looks charming on a cold winter's night. Make this in an old shoebox—or, if you can get it, in a pumpkin with a big window cut in one side and the seeds scooped out.

An idea from the Continent which is fun, especially for the children, are calendars for December in the shape of houses with twenty-five windows to open in order, one each day. Behind each is a little Christmas figure. These

Our own Christmas decorations are a mixed batch, ranging from the venerable to the last-minute invention. The ceiling festoons are 1938 vintage Woolworth. The ribbed globe round the light is home-made from the hoops of a potato barrel bound with coloured ribbon and hung with baubles. This year's new note is the ingenious silver Christmas tree made from a plant stick and wire by Penelope Steane, here giving it a final dressing of tinsel streamers and glass balls

Christmas card-table. What to do with the Christmas cards is always one of the great problems. Here is a new idea for displaying them. All you need is a couple of Fablon dust sheets. Make transparent covers to fit all your tables—the dining table, too, if you use heat-proof table mats on top. Fix a decorative edging with ribbon and drawing-pins and slip the cards underneath and arrange them.

Rack of cards. A length of ordinary garden trellis makes a good display rack for Christmas cards. Hang it on the wall from several X-hooks—the trellis is quite light, and there is no danger of damaging the wall. You can leave the wood natural as I have done, or paint it a bright colour or silver or gold and decorate it with holly and tinsel. This trellis looks best when placed against a dark wall or curtain.

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you can buy or make at home. Another looking-forward-to-Christmas idea is a tall candle divided into twenty-four sections, with one to burn each day.

Table ideas are legion. Christmas food is always good to look at, and flower-lit candles stuck in a bowl of nuts or oranges makes a laden sideboard look inviting. If you have a big pewter or brass plate put three or four polished red apples on it with a few sprigs of holly and a tall, white candle in the middle. You can also make edible candles for the children out of a cylindrical piece of apple with a brazil nut stuck into it. These will light and burn, leaving a roasted nut in the apple.

Fir-cones of different shapes and sizes and pretty, bare branches can be used, either in their natural colours or painted with gold and silver paint, to make enchanting table centres. Try building one on an oval piece of mirror glass to look like a pool of ice and lighting it with a permanent candle made of a single-capped tubular lamp like the one in the picture below. This looks realistically like a candle, fits into any normal lampholder and gives an everlasting glow without burning down or endangering the table centre.

Trailing fronds of ivy laid diagonally across the table and pinned down to a white cloth make a pretty way of dividing up the places.

A tip if you are entertaining a huge family party to Christmas dinner, and the chairs won't go round, is to make three chairs into a bench for five by putting a plank across them and draping them with a big piece of felt or a green card table cloth.

No one needs tips on decorating the Christmas tree. This is a highly individual art; but the most decorative one I have ever seen was all silver, with festoons of silver tinsel and silver glass baubles, topped with a silver star. Another bright idea is to peg small parcels to the branches with dolls' clothes pegs in bright colours. In the cause of safety, use electric lights on the tree, unless you are going to watch it all the time. Have a look at Osram's new "Lilliput" string of Christmas-tree lights, which consists of forty miniature coloured bulbs each fitted with an internal cut-out which ensures that if one or more bulbs fail the remainder stay alight, though you should replace them quickly. Staple the flex lightly to the skirting to avoid trip-up accidents.

Coloured lantern. The basis of this lantern is a low table lamp. Cut a hole in an old biscuit tin and drop it over the lamp to make a base. Then decorate it with stars and tinsel. The lantern part is made of a cylinder of cartridge paper with slots cut in the sides and lined with coloured cellophane. The frill at the top is made of tissue, and stuck round the inside of the cartridge cylinder. You could repeat this frill at the bottom, instead of the biscuit box base, to make a cracker shape.

Lace medallions. Make this medallion out of a cheap white or silver paper doyley with a circle of coloured paper behind it. Pin a big matching bow of paper or ribbon to it with a large drawing-pin which secures the whole medallion to the wall. A set of six or more with different-coloured backing and bows makes an effective decoration in a formal room, pinned all round the wall at shoulder height, particularly against a narrow, striped wallpaper. As a variation on this idea, you could pleat the doyleys into fan shapes, and line them with coloured paper in the same way. Pin a ribbon bow to the pointed end, and through it with a drawing-pin to the wall. These are more effective in groups than by themselves.

Branches on the wall. As a change from holly sprays behind the pictures, you could make a bunch of branches like this of another kind of leaves—last year I used copper beech. Tie the branches together with ribbon, and decorate them with Christmas tree decorations, streamers and tinsel. These look enchanting hung over the fireplace, or on the door or all round the wall. As a surprise note, you could hang tiny presents among the branches, and make them the object of a Christmas treasure hunt for the children. You will get more even shapes if you train and tie the branches to a wire frame made in the size you want to achieve.

Festive Boards

Glowing table centre. Palm trees or dandelion clocks? Whichever you think, they're actually made of transparent drinking straws on a wire stem. The candle is electric, a single-capped tubular lamp, which won't burn down or drip.

Chequered cloth. A good idea for your Christmas dinner is a cloth that will need no laundering afterwards, as high spirits and crowded diners lead to inevitable spills. This one is made of plaited crêpe paper, so arranged to make a harlequin pattern down the side of the table and to give each person a diamond as a place. Use two colours, red and green or green and white, and cut the rolls of crêpe paper in half lengthways to make long strips of the right width.

Holly-leaf mats. These mats, made of gold foil, are particularly effective on a snowy white cloth or a huge piece of green baize. To make them, work out an ideal holly-leaf shape on thick brown paper and use this as a pattern for the foil. If you can get the paper-backed kind, so much the better. Mark the veins by scoring the surface of the foil with a blunt instrument—a sharp one may tear it. Permanent versions could be made of dark green felt, with the veins stitched on in chain stitch.

IN DECORATED
CHRISTMAS PACKINGS
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KEEP THIS

Here is another guide for handymen devised by Roger Smithells to help you pick the right methods and materials for your jobs around the house

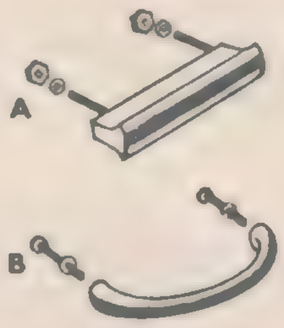
Handyman Guide 12

HANDLES AND GRIPS

PLASTIC KNOB. No additional bolts or screws needed, just screw it in. Use on small drawers, light cabinet doors, etc.

CUPBOARD TURN. The arm turns and catches behind the door frame to keep the door shut. For light cupboard doors, etc.

FLUSH FINGER GRIP. Recessed into the door, it fits flush. Ideal for sliding doors, sash windows, etc.



DRAWER HANDLES. There are two types: solid strip handle 'A,' of wood or plastic and open grip handle 'B,' of plastic or metal suitable for all types of drawer. Both types have bolt fixing.

BOW HANDLE. This type is screwed to the surface. Many styles and sizes are available. Made in either plastic, Bakelite, or in metal. Suitable for lids, light doors, drawers, etc.

GRIP HANDLES. These vary in size from 9 in. to 24 in. The handle for swing doors, and all room doors fitted with ball catches. Many different styles are made.

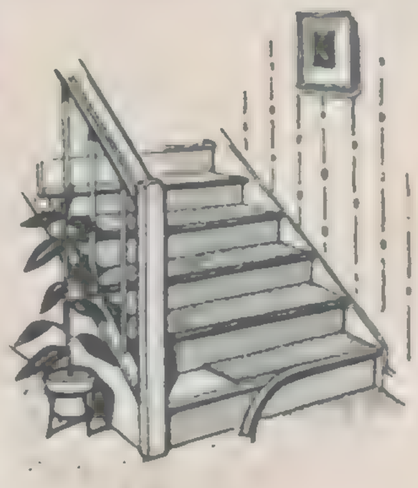
LIFTING HANDLE. Made in iron or brass. For carrying tool boxes, carrying cases, etc. A flush fitting type is made.

SASH LIFT. Made primarily for fitting to sash windows, but is also useful for lifting vertical sliding hatch doors.

DRAWER PULL. Made in metal, wood or plastic. They are best for kitchen cabinet, or table drawers.

It's an Idea

LOW-COST STAIR COVERING



NOSING DETAIL

An original and money-saving method of carpeting a stairway wins a guinea for Mrs. Ward, of The Beeches, Thompson Street, Langley Mill, Nottingham. Fit a length of stout rubber nosing to the nose of each step, and fix it firmly in place. Paper the risers with wallpaper, matching the staircase wall perhaps, and give them a coat of clear washable varnish, or paint them if preferred. Cut out a separate mat of rubber backed carpet to fit each step, and tack it to the stair. If the risers become marked, it is an easy job to repaper or repaint them. You will save a great length of carpet this way, and the mats are easily removable for cleaning.

Send your bright idea, with a rough drawing where possible, to Roger Smithells, "John Bull and Illustrated," 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. One guinea will be paid for each idea published.

The disgrace of our unwanted children

continued from page 11

staggering fact is that ninety-seven out of every hundred of such children have living parents or guardians. The picture is much the same throughout the country. A family service might have prevented the broken homes from which these children came. It might also help to cut down the numbers of young offenders who appear in our courts.

It is not only the broken home which harms a child. One twelve-year-old boy lived in a comfortable home, luxurious by some standards. He went to a grammar school and seemed to have every reasonable advantage in life. Yet he was caught after breaking into a radio shop and the police found several tools and pieces of electrical equipment hidden in his room at home.

None of these things was of any real use to the boy, and there seemed no reason why he should have stolen them.

It turned out that while his father was a strict disciplinarian his mother tended to spoil him—sometimes going behind her husband's back to shield or comfort the child. The stealing was a direct result of this two-way pull at home and of the feeling of insecurity caused by it deep in the boy's mind.

On the other hand, there are "problem" homes where children live in filthy conditions and are virtually uncared for in a material sense, but thrive emotionally because the parents have an uninhibited affection for them.

Both these kinds of family could be helped by a family service. It might also prevent invoking all the paraphernalia of the juvenile courts to deal with minor misdemeanours by children.

Somehow our group would like to see this constant procession of children to the juvenile courts reduced. If a child is precocious, it is far better that it should not become the focus of attention, as in a court. It ought certainly never to hear its parents denounce it as being beyond control, as now happens frequently.

Under a family service there would probably be in each locality a small committee of responsible people to whom parents could bring children in trouble of a not too serious kind.

If the case ultimately had to come to the juvenile court, nothing said before the committee would be used as evidence, so there could be frank speaking. The committee would have no powers except to help and advise.

The Fisher Group, having reached its conclusions about the need for a family service, has submitted its findings to a committee which the Home Secretary has set up under Lord Ingleby, to examine the whole law affecting children.

Quite independently of the Fisher Group, the Council for Children's Welfare began a similar investigation, and has reached similar conclusions.

Some people will wonder how much a family service would cost. How much on the rates and taxes? Well, it costs the country about £500 a year to keep one child in public care. A family service worker, whose efforts might well keep dozens of children with their families instead of in public care, would earn about £600 a year.

It is one of the few cases in which the cheap thing to do is also the right thing to do.

THE END

Lake of the Lion

continued from page 24

shore only a little behind Darcy, who had stopped and was standing with a shocked look on his face. Beyond him, Paule had stopped, too, and so had Laroche—the three of them quite still.

They were all of them staring at something down along the lake shore and, as I passed them, I saw it, too; a body lying crumpled in the snow, with the torn canvas of a tent forlornly draped from its slanting pole. Beside the body were two rusted steel containers, and from one of them stretched the line of an aerial. Brille lay on his side, stiff-frozen. One hand still clutched the mike of the transmitter.

Behind me I heard Paule whisper: "We are too late." Then slowly she turned and faced Laroche. "You killed him! You left him here to die—alone." She stumbled blindly away.

If Laroche had let her go, it might have been all right; but he couldn't. "Paule—for God's sake!" he cried.

He jerked her round, and then he stepped back as though at a blow, for her eyes blazed with hatred. I heard her cry: "No. Keep away from me." She made a quick movement. There was the glitter of steel, and then she was stabbing at him with her Indian knife, stabbing at him again and again, screaming at him until finally he sank groaning at her feet.

Suddenly she flung the knife from her and with a sobbing intake of breath, fell on to the snow beside him. "Darling!" She seized hold of his head and stared down into his face, which was paper white and bloodless under its stubble. *"Mon Dieu!"* She looked up and her eyes lighted on Darcy and myself, still standing there, helpless spectators of the tragedy.

"I think I've killed him," she said in a toneless voice. "Would one of you see, please." As Darcy went and knelt beside Laroche's body, she stood up, suddenly quite composed. "I am going to—see to my father now," she said, and she went slowly down through the trees towards the sunken aircraft, moving like a sleepwalker.

I went over to Darcy, my knees trembling and weak with the shock of what had happened. "Is he—dead?"

Darcy didn't reply. He had laid Laroche's body out on the snow and unzipped his parka. When he had the chest exposed, with the half-dozen wounds gaping red, he said curtly: "Fetch that girl back here. I want a big fire, hot water and bandages."

"He's alive then?"

"Yeah—just. I guess the thickness of the parka saved him."

I went down to the little beach where Paule knelt beside her father.

"We were too late," she said. "If only I had done something about it when that first report of a transmission came through. Look! He was trying to get through to me. And I agreed," she murmured brokenly. "I agreed that the search should be called off."

"It wasn't your fault," I said.

"It was my fault. I should have known. Why did Albert do it? Why did he leave him here?" Speaking of Laroche seemed to remind her of what she'd done. "Have I killed him?"

"No," I said. "He's still alive. But we've got to get busy." I dragged her roughly to her feet. "Pull yourself together, Paule," I said. "There's nothing you can do here."

SHE began to sob, wildly and uncontrollably. I could do nothing with her. I left her there and went up into the trees and began to hack branches.

It was only when the fire was lit that I looked round for Paule. She had left her father and was kneeling beside Laroche. She had used her parka and sweater to cover him. She had half killed the man, yet whatever he had done, she still loved him.

As soon as the fire was blazing, we carried Laroche to it and laid him on dried moss close against the rocks so that the heat of the fire would be

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Lake of the Lion

continued from page 28

reflected to form a pocket of warmth. At least he wouldn't die of shock through exposure to cold. But when I said this to Darcy, he gave me a hard, calculating look.

"That's a matter we've got to decide tonight," he said in an odd voice.

"How do you mean?"

He glanced round quickly to see that Paule wasn't listening. "We can't carry him and we've food for only one day. If we stay here with him, we all die."

"There's the radio," I said.

"Yeah?" He gave a sceptical grunt. "It'd need a skilled operator to get that thing working."

I went back to Paule and helped her get Laroche into a sleeping-bag. "I shall stay here," she said at last in a small, tight voice. "Whatever happens I shall stay with Albert. There is nothing else for me now."

SHE went to her pack and took out a small tin of Bovril and a metal flask. She mixed the hot drink in her own tin mug and was bending over Laroche, lifting his head and trying to force a little of the hot liquid between his teeth, when Darcy returned.

He dropped wearily on to the ground beside me. "He buried Baird a little way back amongst the rocks," he said quietly, leaning his head close to mine. "He tied two sticks together to form a cross." Darcy opened his hand to show a piece of stone the size of a pigeon's egg. Where he'd rubbed it clean there was a dull gleam to it. "Know what that is? I found an oil-can on top of the grave, filled with these—like some pagan offering to the dead. Feel the weight of it."

He dropped it into my hand and the cold touch made me shiver.

"I can't get him to swallow," Paule said. She was squatting beside Laroche with the steaming mug in her hand.

"Then drink it yourself," Darcy said harshly. He took the fragment

COMPANIONS—2

The company in which you will improve most will be least expensive to you.

George Washington

from my hand and passed it to her. "I guess you know more about minerals than I do. Tell me what that is."

She stared at the fragment as it lay in her hand. "It's gold," she said.

"Yeah, that's what I thought it was. This place is a goldmine."

"Oh, no," she whispered. And then she was staring at us, and the fear that had suddenly taken hold of her was there in her eyes and in the trembling of the hand that held the nugget.

I got up and went down to where Darcy had found Baird's grave.

"I wonder when he died?" I said as Darcy joined me.

"He was probably killed in the crash."

I shook my head. "No. Nobody was even injured when the plane crashed. Laroche admitted that to me." I was thinking of that oil-can full of nuggets. I felt certain it was Briffe who had placed that there. "I—I think we should see the body," I said.

"Good God! Why?"

I didn't dare tell him what I expected to find but, much as I disliked the thought of disturbing the grave, I knew suddenly that I had to see for myself how Baird had died.

My urgency must have communicated itself to Darcy, for he got down beside me and helped to shift the pile of stones. And when we had finally uncovered the upper part of the body, we stayed for a long time on our knees without moving or saying anything, for the whole side of the man's face had been laid bare.

"An axe did that," Darcy said at length, and I nodded. But, though

THE HOUR OF TRUTH

by Denise Egerton

BEGINS NEXT WEEK

it was what I'd feared, I hadn't been prepared for such a ghastly wound.

"That settles it," Darcy said thickly. "I've made up my mind. We start back tomorrow, and we leave him here." He meant Laroche, of course, but he couldn't bring himself to mention his name. "Well, say something, can't you?" he cried angrily. "Do you think I'm wrong to leave a man who could do a thing like this?"

I looked up at Darcy. "Laroche didn't do this," I said. "It was Briffe who went berserk."

"Briffe?" He stared at me as though I'd gone crazy.

I nodded, for now that I'd said it, I knew it was true; I could see how it all fitted in—the wound in Laroche's head, his decision to trek out on his own. And no wonder he'd been convinced that Baird was dead. How could he have expected any man to live with his head cut open like that? And he'd been prepared to go to any lengths to save Paule from the truth.

I explained all this to Darcy.

"I just can't believe it," he said.

"Then what about the can full of nuggets you found on the grave? It was Briffe who buried Baird, not Laroche." I added: "You know the sort of man he was. He'd spent all his life prospecting, and this was one of the places he'd always wanted to find. Paule said so herself the other night. Well, he found it."

He was silent a long time. Finally, he said: "Well, see you don't let Paule have any idea what's in your mind."

"She knows already," I told him. "She knew the instant you handed her the nugget."

He looked at me a moment, and then he nodded. "Yeah, I guess so. It's a terrible thing." And, as I started to cover Baird's body again, he said: "We'll have to bury him—up here beside Baird." And then he added, with sudden decision: "But we leave in the morning. You understand? Whatever we do about Laroche, we leave in the morning. We got to."

It was obvious that Paule now knew the truth as soon as Darcy told her we would be leaving in the morning. "We'll make Bert as comfortable as possible," he said, "and then the three of us, travelling light——"

But she didn't let him finish. "Do you think I will leave Albert to die here alone? You and Ian—you leave in the morning. Try to get through. I will keep the fire going as long as I can. If you have good luck, then perhaps you can get a helicopter out to us in time."

"Yeah, maybe." Darcy eyed the narrow beach doubtfully. And then he said: "We're just going to bury your father, Paule. Maybe you'd like to be there."

Her hand went slowly to the gold crucifix at her neck. "No," she said. "I will say a prayer for him here—with Albert."

We carried the body along the shore and laid it out beside Baird's grave. Then we covered it with stones and the black silt from the beach.

"Well, that's that, I guess," Darcy said and turned abruptly away. On the way back to the fire he said: "Now we just sip a little coffee and leave what food there is for Paule. Agreed?"

I nodded, though my mouth was running at the thought of eating. "You've decided to leave them, then?"

"What the hell else can I do?" he demanded angrily. "She won't leave. I know that now. And another thing. If we do manage to get out, we don't tell anybody the truth. Briffe and Baird died the way Bert said. Okay?"

"Yes," I said.

"Good." He patted my arm. "It's a hard thing for you to have to do, considering what it was that brought you out here. But I think you owe it to Bert. He risked a lot to keep that thing a secret—and he'll be dead before we've any chance of getting him out."

When we got back to the fire, we found Paule lying beside Laroche, her head buried in her arms, sobbing convulsively. Darcy stood for a moment, looking down at her. "Poor kid!" he murmured. But he didn't go to her. Instead, he got the empty kettle and started down to the lake to fill it.

Whilst he was seeing to the coffee, I went down to where the remains of Briffe's tent lay and searched about. I kept on finding nuggets. The sight of them sickened me. I could picture him searching frenziedly along the lake edge, with Baird lying in a pool of blood and Laroche fled into the timber on the start of his long trek out, and I couldn't help wondering how he'd felt when the gold lust had left him and sanity had returned. He'd thrown the little useless hoards away in disgust. . . .

The light went early, fading into a sleet storm that chilled us. Every few hours during the night one of us would get up and replenish the fire.

At last daylight crept back into the sombre cleft of the lake. Darcy was already up, quietly collecting his things together. Paule had risen, too, and disappeared into the timber.

I got to my feet as Darcy reached down for his pack, which was barely half full. And then he looked up as Paule came hurrying back to us. Her face had a white, frozen look of horror.

"What is it?" Darcy asked.

"Up there by that outcrop." She pointed a trembling hand towards a huddle of rocks that stood amongst the trees. "Where did you bury him?"

"Your father? I told you, down by Baird's grave," Darcy said.

"Of course. It was silly of me, but I thought for a moment——" A shudder ran through her. And then she was staring at me with wide eyes. . . .

I don't think I was surprised at what I found under that rock outcrop. I think I had known that I was being sent to the remains of my grandfather.

He lay close under the largest of the rocks, in a sort of gulley—a skeleton, nothing more. The bone of the forehead was shattered and at the base of the skull was the neat-drilled hole where the bullet, fired by Laroche's grandfather, had entered.

I heard Darcy behind me. "Funny thing," he murmured, peering down over my shoulder, "I'd almost forgotten about that earlier expedition."

After covering the bones with handfuls of wet earth, we went back down to the fire. Laroche was not conscious. We said goodbye to Paule and she kissed us both. Then we left.

An hour before nightfall we were back at the lake where Laroche and I had left them, and there were all the things they'd abandoned to make that final dash to Lake of the Lion.

It was the last night of any comfort, for in the morning we decided to abandon everything except food, the canoe, one cooking utensil and our sleeping-bags. We ate a huge breakfast and then went on.

There is no point in my describing that terrible journey in detail. The freeze-up caught us and ice formed so thick that we had to abandon the canoe and struggle round the lakes on foot. We were eight days on that journey, and the last two days I doubt whether we made more than half a dozen miles. We were both suffering from frostbite then, and fifty yards or so was all we could do without resting.

On the morning of the ninth day, Darcy couldn't go on. He lay there, staring at me out of his red-rimmed eyes, his lips cracked and blackened.

"You've got to make it," he croaked.

I knew it was Paule he was thinking of, not himself, and I crawled slowly to my feet. I left him and plunged into the timber. It was still snowing. It was also as cold as hell, and at every step the snow dragged at my legs, until I lay down in a white set, unable to go a step farther.

It was then I heard voices. I was within earshot of the grade and I screamed at them. And once I'd started, I couldn't stop, but went on screaming to them for help, even when they'd reached me.

They were two engineers. They had a tent half a mile farther up the grade, and between them they got me to it, handed me over to the cook and went straight off again to get Darcy.

My memory of what happened after that is fragmentary and confused. Gradually the pain of my frozen limbs blotted out everything else, and the next thing I remember, they'd brought Darcy in.

He was still alive, and I heard one of them say he would pull through.

I tried to tell them how they could find Lake of the Lion, but drifted back into unconsciousness. And when I woke again I saw a light and men moving.

The light bobbed closer until its hissing glare was right over me. I could see them then, just their faces picked out by the light—McGovern and Bill Lands. "We got an aircraft standing by for you," McGovern said.

"I don't want anything." I said angrily. "You must save Paule and Laroche."

"Take it easy," he said. "There's nothing to worry about. We got them both out the end of last week."

I stared. "You got them out?"

"Yeah. Four days ago. Mac here saw to it. The first day conditions permitted, he had his Beaver floatplane fly in. It brought Laroche out, then

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Lake of the Lion

continued from previous page

did a second trip to fetch Paule. After that the weather closed in and we couldn't fly. We've been standing by, ready to fly a search for you the moment there was a let-up."

So Paule and Laroche were safe. It seemed incredible. I half closed my eyes against the glare of the pressure lamp, and clear in my mind was the picture of the lake and Paule crouched there beside Laroche. We'd been so certain that we'd be too late to save them.

"But how?" I said. "How did you manage to locate the lake?"

"It was Mac," Lands answered. "He knew——"

"All right, Bill, let me talk to him." The harsh voice moved nearer. "First," McGovern said, "I owe you an apology. Did you guess that I knew about Lake of the Lion when we had that little talk down at Seven Islands?"

I nodded, wondering what was coming.

"I thought so." He paused. "I gather from Paule Briffe you know the truth now of what happened out there after the crash?"

"Yes," I said.

"Okay. Well, this is what I want to tell you. This expedition of yours—it's news. You're headed for hospital, but as soon as the docs give the okay, there'll be a score of newspapermen asking you for your version.

"You say your father was right and that Briffe made that transmission, you tell them the truth of what happened and you'll ruin two lives. That girl's had about all she can take right now. As for Bert—well, he came to me as soon as he got out and told me the whole thing.

"In that he acted right. I was his boss. And because of that he was prepared to abide by my decision. He told me what had happened and what he'd done and why.

"He was thinking of Paule mainly, but the fact is that if we'd flown back in and found Briffe alive, we were certain he'd have to stand trial for murder. In the circumstances, it seemed to me Bert had acted for the best." He hesitated. "It was rough justice. But it was justice as we saw it." And then, after a moment, he added: "I guess you can understand now how we felt when you arrived."

"What do you want me to do?" I asked.

"Keep your mouth shut. Leave the world thinking Briffe and Baird were both dead when Bert left them at the lakeside. Okay? In return, I'm gonna call that concession the Ferguson Concession and cut you in for a share of whatever we get out."

"I don't need a bribe," I said hotly.

"No," he said. "No, I guess you don't. But if you're gonna save those two from a lot more misery, then you're gonna have to deny your own father. You're gonna have to say there never was a transmission. And if you do that, it's only fair that your grandfather's original discovery should at least be recognized. . . . Well. What do you say?"

And when I agreed, too tired to insist that I didn't want anything more to do with the place, his face broke into that sudden, transforming smile. "That's swell," he said. "We'll get you to the airstrip now."

And so, with Darcy unconscious beside me, I started on the journey back to civilization.

THE END

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"The Land God Gave To Cain" is published as a novel by William Collins, price 15s.

Montgomery

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leisure. This was in accordance with the accepted military thinking of the day.

I decided to reverse the process and thus alter the whole conception of how the battle was to be fought. My modified plan now was to hold off, or contain, the enemy armour while we carried out a methodical destruction of the infantry divisions holding the defensive system.

These unarmoured divisions would be destroyed by means of a "crumbling" process, the enemy being attacked from the flank and rear and cut off from their supplies.

I aimed to get my armour beyond the area of the "crumbling" operations. I would then turn the enemy minefields to our advantage by using them to prevent the enemy armour from interfering with our operations; this would be done by closing the approaches through the minefields with our tanks.

The turning point

The success of the whole operation would depend largely on whether 30 Corps could succeed in the "break-in" battle and establish the corridors through which the armoured divisions of 10 Corps must pass.

I issued a personal message to the officers and men of the army.

> "The battle which is now about to begin will be one of the decisive battles of history. It will be the turning point of the war. The eyes of the whole world will be on us, watching anxiously which way the battle will swing.
>
> "We can give them their answer at once, 'It will swing our way.'
>
> "We have first-class equipment; good tanks; good anti-tank guns; plenty of artillery and plenty of ammunition; and we are backed up by the finest air striking force in the world.
>
> "All that is necessary is that each one of us, every officer and man, should enter this battle with the determination to see it through—to fight and to kill—and finally, to win.
>
> "If we all do this there can be only one result—together we will hit the enemy for 'six,' right out of North Africa.
>
> "The sooner we win this battle, which will be the turning point of this war, the sooner we shall all get back home to our families.
>
> "Therefore, let every officer and man enter the battle with a stout heart, and with the determination to do his duty so long as he has breath in his body.
>
> "AND LET NO MAN SURRENDER SO LONG AS HE IS UNWOUNDED AND CAN FIGHT.
>
> "Let us all pray that 'the Lord mighty in battle' will give us the victory.
>
> B. L. MONTGOMERY,
> Lieutenant-General, G.O.C.-in-C.,
> Eighth Army."

After briefing the press on the morning of October 23, I went forward that afternoon to my Tactical H.Q. established near H.Q. 30 Corps.

Throughout the war I have kept a very precise diary and what follows is taken from notes made each day during the battle.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24—The whole area was one enormous minefield and the two corridors in the north had not been completely opened for the armoured divisions of 10 Corps by 8 a.m.

In accordance with my orders, I expected the armoured divisions to fight their way out into the open. But there

was some reluctance to do so and I gained the impression during the morning that they were pursuing a policy of inactivity.

The 10th Corps commander was not displaying the drive and determination so necessary when things begin to go wrong. I therefore sent for Lumsden and told him he must "drive" his divisional commanders, and if there was any more hanging back I would remove them from their commands and put in more energetic personalities. This action produced immediate results. By 6 p.m. that evening the armoured brigade of 1st Armoured Division in the northern corridor was out in the open; it was then attacked by 15th Panzer Division, which was exactly what I wanted.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25.—I have always thought that this was when the real crisis in the battle occurred. At 2.30 a.m. 10 Corps reported that the break-out of 10th Armoured Division in the southern corridor in 30 Corps' sector was not proceeding well and that minefields and other difficulties were delaying progress. The divisional commander had said he did not feel happy about the operation, and that even if he did get out he would be in a very unpleasant position on the forward slopes of the Miteriya Ridge.

In the northern corridor, 1st Armoured Division was out in the open and was being furiously attacked by the enemy armour, which was exactly what the doctor ordered—so long as I was the doctor in question.

De Guingand rightly decided it was necessary for me to see the two corps commanders concerned and grip the situation; he issued orders for a conference at my Tactical H.Q. at 3.30 a.m. and then came and woke me and told me what he had done. I agreed. Leese and Lumsden arrived on time and I asked each to explain his situation.

I discovered that in the 10th Armoured Division, one of the armoured regiments was already out in the open and that it was hoped more would be out by dawn. The divisional commander wanted to withdraw it *all* back behind the minefields and give up the advantages he had gained; his reason was that his situation out in the open would be very unpleasant and his division might suffer heavy casualties.

Ten miles behind

Lumsden agreed with him; he asked if I would personally speak to the divisional commander on the telephone. I did so at once and discovered to my horror that he himself was some 16,000 yards (nearly ten miles) behind his leading armoured brigades.

I spoke to him in no uncertain voice, and ordered him to go forward at once and take charge of his battle; he was to fight his way out, and lead his division from in front and not from behind.

By 8 a.m. all my armour was out in the open and we were in the position I had hoped to have achieved at 8 a.m. the day before.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28—Hard fighting had been going on for the previous three days and I began to realize from the casualty figures that I must be careful. I knew that the final blow must be put in on 30 Corps' front, but at the moment I was not clear exactly where. But I had to get ready for it. So I decided to turn my southern flank (13 Corps) over to the defensive except for patrol activities, to widen divisional fronts, and to pull into reserve the divisions I needed for the final blow. The N.Z. Division I had already got into reserve.

We now had the whole of Rommel's Panzer Army opposite the northern corridor and I knew we would never break out from there. So I made that area a defensive front and pulled 1st Armoured Division into reserve.

I also decided that for the moment I would use only 30 Corps to fight the battle in the north; so I pulled 10 Corps H.Q. into reserve, to get it ready for the break-out.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29—During the morning it became increasingly evident that the whole of Rommel's German forces were grouped in the northern part of the front. The action of 1st Armoured Division in the northern corridor, and the operations of 9th Australian Division northwards towards the coast, had clearly made him think that we intended to break out in the north along the coast, which was indeed my design at the time.

The Germans were now in the north, the Italians together in the south; and the dividing line between them appeared to be just to the north of our original northern corridor.

I at once changed my plan and decided to direct the final blow at this point of junction, but overlapping well on to the Italian front. I took this decision at 11 a.m., October 29.

When could we stage that blow?

Tricking the enemy

I knew that Operation Torch, mounted from England, was to land in the Casablanca-Oran area on November 8. We must defeat the enemy, and break up his army, in time to be of real help to Torch. Quite apart from wanting to get to Tripoli first! But more immediately, the timing was affected by the need to get the Martuba airfields so as to assist by giving air cover to the last possible convoy to Malta, which was short of food and almost out of aviation fuel. The convoy was to leave Alexandria about the middle of November.

I decided that on the night of October 30-31 the 9th Australian Division would attack strongly northwards to reach the sea; this would keep the enemy looking northwards. Then on the next night I would blow a deep hole in the enemy front just to the north of the original corridor; this hole would be made by the 2nd New Zealand Division which would be reinforced by the 9th Armoured Brigade and two infantry brigades; the operation would be under command of 30 Corps. Through the gap, I would pass 10 Corps with its armoured divisions.

What, in fact, I proposed to do was to deliver a hard blow with the right, and follow it the next night with a knock-out blow with the left. The operation was christened Supercharge.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30—I spent the morning writing out my directive for Supercharge. I always wrote such orders myself, and never let the staff do it. This was the master plan and only the master could write it.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31—It was clear to me that the stage management problems in connection with Supercharge were such that if launched on this night it might fail. I therefore decided to postpone it for twenty-four hours to deliver the blow on the night of November 1-2.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2—At 1 a.m. Supercharge began and the attack went in on a front of four thousand yards to a depth of six thousand yards. It was a success and we were all but out into the open desert.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3—There were indications the enemy was about to withdraw; he was almost finished.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4—At 2 a.m. I directed two hard punches at the "hinges" of the final break-out area where the enemy was trying to stop us widening the gap which we had blown. That finished the battle.

The armoured car regiments went through as dawn was breaking and soon the armoured divisions got clean away into the open desert; they were now in country clear of minefields, where they could operate against the enemy rear areas and retreating columns.

Decisive defeat

Rommel's doom was sounded at Alam Halfa; it was the turning point of the desert war. After that, he was smashed in battle at Alamein. He had never been beaten before, though he had often had to "nip back to get more petrol."

Now he had been decisively defeated. The doom of the Axis forces in Africa was certain—provided we made no more mistakes.

The pursuit proper began on November 5 with 10 Corps (Lumsden) in the van. I left 30 Corps (Leese) to reorganize to the west of the break-out area. 13 Corps (Horrocks) had the task

In Short

Lionel de Lacey

It was not wise, it was not kind,
His parents now admit,
To call the infant Lionel—
It *warped* the child, a bit;
It influenced his outlook,
And made him rough and wild,
Till Lionel de Lacey was
A terrifying child.

"Ho! I'm a lion," growled Lionel
When stranger ventured near.
"Do lions have baths?" snarled Lionel,
"Or wash behind the ear?"
"What—*go to school?*" roared Lionel,
"Since when have lions done that?
And why the chair? I *much* prefer
My dinner on the mat!"

Papa de Lacey undertook
To exercise the boy;
And it was not a period
Of undiluted joy;
Till once (exploring Regent's Park,
As they were wont to do),
He yielded to temptation
And left him at the zoo.

Now Lionel, content at last,
Proclaims his joy all day
By roaring up and down his cage
Engaged in cub-like play.
His eye is bright, his nose is cool,
No aches—no pains—no ills;
His sole ambition to be bought
And trained by Bertram Mills.

GERTRUDE MONRO HIGGS

Sally Plays Her Cards

The trouble about Christmas cards, Sally said, was that they were either too deadly or perfectly ruinous. Who wanted to see Geese flying over Ploughed Fields for the—well—twenty-ninth Christmas running? Or pay five shillings for an angel with real rhinestones glued into its wingtips?

There were quite good in-betweens, she admitted, but the trouble about *them* was that everybody else sent them, to everybody else.

So Sally decided she'd save money and be original by making her own. It seemed a marvellous idea and she dug out her old lino-cutting kit there and then. But she found she'd lost the knack since her schooldays, and when she'd cut her finger four times and made a horrible mess of several square feet of cardboard she thought of a better plan.

She'd be ultra-modern and go Tachiste instead; what apes and three-year-olds could do, thought Sally, she couldn't do worse.

So she put all the cardboard on the kitchen floor and squirted some paint and ink and flour and soot at it, and was going to blend the whole lot in together when the children stampeded through.

The result was, of course, that she was still clearing up paint and ink and flour and soot from all the carpets, and I wasn't to be surprised if all I got was a printed notice saying she wasn't sending any cards this year.

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

Inside Information

With ribbons and bows
And tinsel I tied it;
And *then* I remembered
The price tag inside it.

BOBETTE TOBY

Note From The Head

I did not mind Mary bringing her dolls to school when she was a little girl as she seemed to find it much easier to learn with them near her; but as she has grown, so have her dolls. She has now appeared with an American doll that is as big as she is and seems to have a small gramophone inside. When wound up it jives. Its sophisticated appearance makes it quite unsuitable for the classroom.

Unfortunately the children have adopted it as a kind of mascot and insist that it should take part in lessons and even receive marks. If Miss Parker objects, a mutinous spirit appears. It seems likely that the doll will come top.

Miss Parker is becoming affected by the children's pretence that the toy is really another pupil. When she found herself threatening it with punishment she told me that either she or it must leave.

Now another girl has produced a life-size doll, this time a sailor, something I could certainly not permit in a girls' class. However, it is difficult to forbid her when Mary has one. I have therefore decided that no dolls at all, coming above their owner's knee, may be brought to school.

R. G. G. PRICE

Montgomery

continued from previous page

of cleaning up the battle area of Alamein and of salving all the war material of the enemy and of our own forces. It also had to collect all the Italian prisoners; there were many of them and they surrendered in droves, headed by the generals carrying their suitcases.

My ultimate objective was Tripoli.

I had reached the conclusion that command of a corps in a major battle was above Lumsden's ceiling. On the other hand, he was a good trainer and as such he would be valuable back in England. I decided to ask for Lieutenant-General Dempsey to be sent out from England to take over 13 Corps from Horrocks. I would then have three reliable Corps Commanders in Leese, Horrocks and Dempsey. All these moves were agreed by Alexander.

Almost captured . . .

Soon after the pursuit began I was in danger of capture. A reconnaissance party was sent forward to select a site for my headquarters in the Mersa Matruh area; two members of this party were Hugh Mainwaring and my stepson, Dick Carver.

On approaching Mersa Matruh the party took a road leading down to a place on the shore called Smuggler's Cove, just to the east of the town. The enemy were still there; they should all have been rounded up by that time, but our forces moving across the desert were halted by heavy rain.

The reconnaissance party was captured. I myself with a small escort was moving well forward in rear of the leading elements of the army and was about to take the road leading to Smuggler's Cove. But at that moment I ran into a sharp engagement which was going on a few hundred yards in front; we had bumped into an enemy rearguard which was trying to hold us off while they cleared Mersa Matruh.

If I had gone down the road to Smuggler's Cove, it is possible I would have run into the enemy; if so, I'm pretty clear that I wouldn't be writing this today.

I "drove" the Eighth Army hard, and on November 12 issued the following message:

> "In three weeks we have completely smashed the German and Italian Army, and pushed the fleeing remnants out of Egypt, having advanced ourselves nearly three hundred miles up to and beyond the frontier. . . .
>
> "The prisoners captured number 30,000, including nine generals.
>
> "The amount of tanks, artillery, anti-tank guns, transport, aircraft, etc., destroyed or captured is so great that the enemy is completely crippled.
>
> "This is a very fine performance and I want, first, to thank you all for the way you responded to my call and rallied to the task. . . .
>
> B. L. MONTGOMERY,
> General,
> G.O.C.-in-C., Eighth Army."

It will be noticed from the signature of this message that I was now a general, having been a lieutenant-general when I arrived in the desert on August 13. I was promoted general for "distinguished services in the field" after the Battle of Alamein, and appointed a K.C.B. at the same time.

In view of the awkward country to the south and the difficulty of a frontal attack, it would obviously be preferable to manoeuvre Rommel out of the Agheila position and then attack him in the easier country to the west. I thought this could be done if I did not delay too long.

Leese's 30 Corps had now taken over the lead from 10 Corps; I reconnoitred the position in the last week in November and gave Leese my orders, leaving the details in his capable hands.

I fixed December 15 as the date on which the operation would begin. I then decided that I would fly back to Cairo to discuss further plans with Alexander.

When I got back to my headquarters just east of Benghazi, I found preparations for facing up to the Agheila position were well advanced.

Everything went well. The enemy began to withdraw the moment our frontal attack developed; but the New Zealanders had got in behind them by December 15, and at one time we had the whole of Rommel's Panzer Army in between the New Zealand Division and 7th Armoured Divisions, which was advancing strongly. The Germans broke into small groups and burst their way through gaps in the strung-out New Zealand positions; fighting was intense and confused all day on December 16, and prisoners were captured and recaptured on both sides.

Jump to Tripoli

The Panzer Army finally got through to the west, but it was severely mauled by the New Zealanders and also suffered heavily from air attack.

The Battle of Agheila was now over; that position was firmly in our hands.

I decided that the Eighth Army needed a halt during which it could pull itself together and get ready for the final "jump" to Tripoli. Indeed, officers and men deserved a rest and I was determined they should have it. I ordered that no offensive operations

"We're thinking of buying the house next door. What are you like as neighbours?"

"They make quite a thing of dishing out the Christmas bonus in this firm, don't they?"

would take place until after Christmas.

It was very cold. Turkeys, plum puddings, beer, were all ordered up from Egypt and the staff concentrated on ensuring that it all arrived in time.

I enjoyed that Christmas in the desert; I think we all did. We had a feeling that we had achieved something. The Agheila bogy had been laid. Morale was high.

Shortly after Christmas I received the following letter from a soldier in the Eighth Army. That letter, from an ordinary soldier, made me feel very happy.

S/13056697, Pte. Glaister, G.,
"A" Branch, Rear H.Q., 8th Army.
23 Dec., 42.

Sir,

For a private soldier to write a personal letter to an army commander is perhaps most unusual, even if the Regulations don't wholly forbid it. But this isn't really a personal letter—it is written on behalf of thousands of men in the Eighth Army.

On October 21, 1942, the D.A.Q.M.G. gathered us informally together, and read your message to us.

There can never have been such a message read to troops before, with the trust and confidence it placed in them. This message was a bond, and for the first time in my army life I felt I *belonged* to something—to some live force that had a job to do, a job so hard that even my work as a clerk had a place in a gigantic scheme. I know from talking to men in this and other units that your speech—a man-to-man speech—had a tremendous effect on their spirits.

You achieved far more by your human, personal message than any Order of the Day could have done. For myself, thank you, sir, for this new feeling. You have made us proud to belong to the Eighth Army. . . .

God bless you, sir, and guide you at all times.

Yours obediently and humbly,
Geoffrey Glaister,
Pte.

Imperial 'rocket'

The advance on Tripoli began on January 15. Things went well to begin with and by January 19 we were up against the Homs-Tarhuna position, which the enemy clearly meant to hold if he could. On the axis of the coast road through Homs the 51st (H) Division seemed to be getting weary and generally displayed a lack of initiative and ginger.

A note in my diary dated January 20 reads as follows: "Sent for the G.O.C. 51st (Highland) Division and gave him an imperial 'rocket'; this had an immediate effect."

The leading troops entered Tripoli at 4 a.m. on January 23, 1943, three months to a day since the beginning of the Alamein battle.

I foresaw certain dangers in the proximity of my army to a large city like Tripoli. Much fighting lay ahead and I was not going to have the Eighth Army getting "soft," or deteriorating in any way. I forbade the use of houses, buildings, etc., for headquarters and troops; all would live in the fields and in the desert, as we had done for many months.

Having given orders about these things, I drove into the city with Leese and we sat in the sun on the seafront and ate our sandwich lunch.

The next tough battle would be on the Mareth Line; this was a very strong position and the main feature of the attack upon it would have to be an outflanking movement round its western flank.

Towards the end of February the port of Tripoli was working well and we were discharging up to 3,500 tons a day. My administrative anxieties were over and

COMPANIONS—3

Tell me what company you keep, and I'll tell you what you are.

Cervantes

I could bring 10 Corps forward to Tripoli from the Tobruk-Benghazi area.

In accordance with decisions taken at the Casablanca Conference, which had assembled in January, the Eighth Army was to come under General Eisenhower for the fighting in Tunisia; Alexander was made Deputy C.-in-C. and was to command the land forces. Tedder became C.-in-C. of all air forces in the Mediterranean theatre. This grouping was good, and if we played our cards properly the successful outcome of the operations in Tunisia was certain.

Alexander told me he had found things in a terrible mess when he went over to join General Eisenhower. The First Army was being heavily attacked on the southern part of its front and everything looked like sliding there. Generally, he found stagnation; no policy, no plan, the front all mixed up, no reserves, no training anywhere, no building up for the future, so-called reinforcement camps in a disgraceful state and so on.

He found the American troops disappointing; they were mentally and physically soft, and very "green." It was the old story: lack of proper training allied to no experience of war and linked with too high a standard of living. They were going through their early days, just as we had had to go through ours.

When the Americans had learned their lesson, and had gained in experience, they proved themselves to be first-class troops. It took time; but they did it more quickly than we did.

Rommel attacked us early in the morning of March 6 with three Panzer divisions: this attack was beaten off. He attacked again in the afternoon; again he was driven back.

I fought the battle in the same way as I had at Alam Halfa. I made up my mind that Rommel's attack would be made in a certain way and I planned to receive it on ground of my own choosing. I refused to move to counter any of his thrusts.

Attack at Mareth

The fifty-two tanks which Rommel lost would have been of great value to him at Mareth.

The Mareth Line had been constructed by the French in Tunisia as a defensive position in case of Italian aggression from Tripolitania. It was very strong naturally and had been improved artificially by the French, and later by the Germans. Its eastern flank rested on the sea and its western flank on the mountain massif of Matmata. A switch line ran north-west from Matmata towards El Hamma.

The country to the west of the Matmata hills was reported to be an impassable "sand sea," stretching away to the west for many miles. The French told me that any outflanking movement through this sand sea was impossible. I decided that a frontal attack against such a strong position would be unlikely to succeed by itself, for there was little room for manoeuvre between the Matmata hills and the sea. The main feature of my plan must be an outflanking movement to the west of the Matmata hills; to be synchronized with a limited frontal attack.

The problem then was: could a route through the sand sea be found?

A passable route was found by the Long Range Desert Group, and the plan then took shape.

I issued the following message to my army on March 20:

"1. On March 5 Rommel addressed his troops in the mountains overlooking our positions and said that if they did not take Medenine, and force the Eighth Army to withdraw, then the days of the Axis forces in North Africa were numbered.

"The next day, March 6, he attacked the Eighth Army. He should have known that the Eighth Army NEVER withdraws; therefore his attack could end only in failure—which it did.

"2. We will now show Rommel that he was right in the statement he made to his troops.

"The days of the Axis forces in North Africa are indeed numbered.

"The Eighth Army and the Western Desert Air Force, together constituting one fighting machine, are ready to advance. We all know what that means, and so does the enemy.

"3. In the battle that is now to start, the Eighth Army:

(a) Will destroy the enemy now facing us in the Mareth position.

(b) Will burst through the Gabes Gap.

(c) Will then drive northwards on Sfax, Sousse, and finally Tunis.

"4. We will not stop, or let up, till Tunis has been captured, and the enemy has either given up the struggle or has been pushed into the sea.

"5. The operations now about to begin will mark the close of the campaign in North Africa. Once the battle starts the eyes of the whole world will be on the Eighth Army, and millions of people will listen to the wireless every day—hoping anxiously for good news, and plenty of it, every day.

"If each one of us does his duty, and pulls his full weight, then nothing can stop the Eighth Army. And nothing will stop it.

"6. With faith in God, and in the justice of our cause, let us go forward to victory.

"7. Forward to Tunis! Drive the enemy into the sea!"

This battle has been described by several writers and it seems unnecessary to tell the detailed story again. The

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Montgomery

continued from previous page

major tactics may be summarized as follows:

(a) The battle opened with a hard blow on our right.

(b) When this blow went in, a strong outflanking movement was set in motion on our left.

By 9 a.m. on March 28 we were in possession of the famous Mareth Line, after a battle lasting only a week.

It was obvious that the end of the war in Africa would now come quite soon. The Eighth Army had only to burst through the Gabes gap and join hands with the American forces; the remaining enemy would then be hemmed in, and in an ever-diminishing area.

We had a stiff one-day battle on the line of the Wadi Akarit north of Gabes on April 6, where we took another seven thousand prisoners. On April 8 we joined up with the American forces moving eastwards from Gafsa.

On April 10 we captured Sfax.

Aircraft from Ike

General Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, Bedell Smith, had visited me in Tripoli in February and we had discussed the problem of how soon the Eighth Army could join up with the First Army north of Gabes. I had said that I would be in Sfax by April 15. Bedell Smith said that if I could do that, General Eisenhower would give me anything I liked to ask for. I said I would do it, and would like an aeroplane for my personal use. Bedell Smith agreed, willingly.

On the morning of April 10 I sent a message to Eisenhower asking for the aircraft. It arrived on April 16, a B17 (Flying Fortress). It made me a thoroughly mobile general.

Later, I got properly ticked off by Brooke, the C.I.G.S., for my action in the matter. He said that it was all a joke on the part of Bedell Smith and that Eisenhower was furious when I demanded the aircraft.

I explained that it was very far from a joke on that day at Tripoli when the statement was made. I don't think Bedell Smith had ever told Eisenhower about it, and he was suddenly confronted with having to pay.

Brooke added that the R.A.F. could well have provided me with an aircraft; they certainly could, but didn't—in spite of my repeated requests. Eisenhower produced it at once.

On April 10 I wrote to Alexander saying that a decision was required about which army should make the main effort for the final phase in Tunisia. I recommended that the First Army should do so. But the initial attempt of the First Army to break through to Tunis was not successful. It took place on April 23 and was more of a partridge drive than an attack.

I was in bed at the time with tonsillitis and influenza, and so I asked Alexander if he would come and see me at my headquarters near Sousse. He arrived on April 30. I said it was essential to regroup the two armies, First and Eighth, so that the attack on Tunis could be made with the maximum strength in the most suitable area.

I suggested that I should send First Army the 7th Armoured Division, 4th Indian Division, 201st Guards Brigade, and some extra artillery, together with a very experienced corps commander to handle the attack; I meant Horrocks.

Horrocks went over to the First Army and staged the corps attack on Tunis on May 6: it was made in great strength at the selected point and broke clean through the enemy defences to the west of Tunis.

Bizerta and Tunis were captured on May 7 and the enemy was then hemmed in to the Cap Bon peninsula.

The first troops to enter Tunis were those of our own 7th Armoured Division. They had earned this satisfaction. Organized enemy resistance ended on May 12, some 248,000 being taken prisoner.

And so the war in Africa came to a close.

The contribution of the Eighth Army to the final victory in North Africa had been immense. It drove Rommel and his army out of Egypt, out of Cyrenaica, out of Tripolitania, and then helped the First Army to finish them off in Tunisia.

Only first-class troops could have done it and I realized what an honour and what an excitement it was to command such a magnificent army at the time of its greatest triumphs.

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NEXT WEEK: The chaos that dragged out the war in Europe

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The Mackenham monster

continued from page 22

locked doors. Corney Makeshift, the young farmer from Braid End, raised one party, mostly made up of farm labourers with shotguns. The landlord of the Red Lion organized a second, which set out armed with walking sticks, bean hooks and Dutch courage. Tim Kendal led a press patrol equipped with cameras and flash bulbs and relying for defence upon one miniature automatic pistol which one of their number always carried in his vest pocket. Constable Blackwater, the village policeman, had instructions to maintain a night watch in the area.

Unfortunately there was no liaison between these parties. And one result was the Battle of Thunderley Wood.

Reports of what happened are naturally confused, but the first actual clash appears to have occurred when Tubby Wingram of the publican's party made a violent attack on Constable Blackwater in the heart of that little forest; there is some excuse for Tubby, inasmuch as a policeman in his helmet, glimpsed dimly, does look like some superhuman anthropoid seven feet high.

Very soon the two village parties and the police patrol were conducting a sort of Red Indian war with each other in the dark wood. Shots were fired and torches were flashed and there were signal whistles and shoutings. Young Len Brown ran full-pelt back to the inn yelling that there was a thing like King Kong in Thunderley Wood tearing people to pieces. Ed Moore climbed a tree. Ginger Smedly fought his twin brother for twelve minutes before they recognized each other. The police ultimately arrested four semi-conscious people.

At last some sort of order was restored, and the police began to organize the patrols on a more effective basis. One thing all were agreed on: everybody was convinced that there had been Something Else in the wood, something gigantic and terrible.

COMPANIONS—4

Men who know the same things are not long the best company for each other.

R. W. Emerson

Meanwhile Oliver had been hurrying through the cold and piebald night, longing to be within the safety of his brick walls and trying hard to keep his thoughts on Beryl Dodman. But then whistling and bellowing from the dark wood drove from his head all thoughts except the all-compelling one of getting away.

The noises were coming always closer; he was being chased, not by one Savage Snowman, but by a whole pack of them. He plunged desperately through the drifts, racing through the spinneys where swinging branches whipped him, through hedges where the quickthorn tore his clothes.

He had so little wit left in his panic-stricken circlings and twistings that he twice passed his own gate before, at the third time, a glimmer of reason made him enter it. He rushed into Sugarloaf Cottage and slammed the door behind him, dazedly neglecting to lock it, and then sat panting for some minutes before he had strength to pour brandy.

He stood up with a glass in his hand, turned, and dropped it smash on the carpet. Somebody had followed him into the house and now stood in the doorway of the room, looking at him.

But this was no seven-foot ape; only a little man in a blue quilted zip-on sort of boiler suit, a man with a sad and weary look on his face, a man Oliver had met before—Vesuvius? Etna? No—Stromboli! And his enormous bunioned feet of rubber, twenty-four inches from toe to heel, shining wet, obliterated the door mat.

Oliver stared at him for a long pause before he fully realized the implications of what he saw. "Good God!" he said at last. "So it was you!"

"Jus' like I tell you," answered Stromboli, with a weary shrug of his shoulders. "Leetle man in beeg feet-gloves, for a joke."

"A joke!" cried Oliver. "You call this a joke? Scaring people to death?"

But he was conscious of a lightening of spirit while he spoke; so there was nothing to be afraid of, after all. It seemed almost a personal victory.

"Well, it is over now," said Stromboli, heavily. "Ended. They surround me—men with guns, gendarmes. I have nowhere to 'ide, only I find your door open. I do not want to be torn to pieces, like a fox. Well, now, the moment is yours; you can be in all the papers: the man what find the 'ole answer to the Mackenham mystery." He sat down and began peeling off the big feet. "I give you these, make good picture for the papers."

Oliver took one of the feet, held it in his hand, stared at it for minutes together. Then he went quickly out of the room, opened his front door and noticed that on the swept paths and hard road Stromboli had this time left no tracks close to the cottage.

He shut, locked and bolted the door; then went to his kitchen and came back carrying a large pair of domestic scissors with serrated edges, and a newspaper. The paper he spread on the floor; it received the fragments of the rubber foot as he began to cut it up.

"But, m'sieur. . . ."

"Stromboli," he said, "you don't want to be hissed out of the ring next time you appear, do you? You don't want people to write you off as a cheap fakir trying to cash in on a great story? The world wants to believe in fairies, even if they are Himalayan snowmen ten feet tall, and you won't stop it. D'you think anybody'll believe your confession? Not if I know it. Just let me make sure they'll never have the chance to measure up these rubber feet against a plaster cast, and I'll save your reputation."

The Frenchman appeared to be labouring under strong emotion.

"Keep your mouth shut," Oliver went on, "and let it stand. Let it stand for a wonderful mystery to be written about and argued over for generations by people who might otherwise be driving themselves crazy with politics. Don't you see? You've given a great new legend to the world just as surely as if you'd sat down and written a masterpiece."

There were tears in Stromboli's eyes.

"Besides," said Oliver, "my good friend Tim Kendal plans to write a book of sixteen chapters about the Mackenham mystery, and as for myself—well, I owe it my whole married happiness. I ought to show my gratitude. Give me the other foot."

The Frenchman embraced him, crying unashamedly. "Mr. Jeavons," he cried. "What can I say to you? Exactly, this is how I think of it, a little magic to make for the people—like you say, a tale of fairies. Always I want it feenish with no answer. And now, just at the last of my tether, I find perraps the one man what onderstand. What can I say to you?"

When the feet had been destroyed very thoroughly and flung into the dustbin, they drank to the Snowman of Mackenham; Stromboli barefooted in his quilted siren-suit, Oliver still dishevelled, bruised and lacerated from his night of terror, but both radiantly cheerful. Then Miss Dodman rang up to inquire breathlessly if Oliver had reached home safely and, while he spoke tenderly to her, he heard the night patrols of Mackenham go whooping and hallooing past the cottage on their deliciously fruitless pursuit.

After that night the tracks of the yeti were seen no more, though the wonder remained. THE END

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MAKING A SAFER HOME
by ROGER SMITHELLS

Beat the Burglar

Christmas is the season of festive nights out. It is the season of the burglar's nights out, too. But you can prevent him being your unwelcome guest. I asked Mr. R. S. Price, A.C.I.I., who is the Chairman of the Association of Burglar Insurance Surveyors, to give me some up-to-date tips on precautions which can help keep our homes safe from intrusion. Here are my questions and his answers.

Although I have no particularly valuable possessions, should I still worry about burglars?

Yes, you should. Burglaries are no longer confined to mansions. The ordinary suburban householder is just as often a victim nowadays.

Where should I start? With the front door, I suppose.

Yes, you should fit a mortice deadlock of good quality with not less than five levers (Fig. 1). This gives security against forcing, and false and skeleton key entry. Most people have only what is known as a night latch on their front doors, which can be opened silently by pushing a piece of mica between the door post and stile to force back the bolt. It can also easily be forced and the cylinder turned, or the glass panel of the door broken and the latch knob manipulated.

What about the back door?

Here, you probably have a cheap rim-lock, and this should be supplemented by two key-operated mortice rack bolts (Fig. 2) or locking bolts (Fig. 3).

I already have bolts, so why should I fit these special bolts?

Ordinary bolts screwed to the door surface can easily be forced, or manipulated by a thief breaking the glass panel of the door. These special bolts are key operated from the inside only, and give better resistance to forcing.

What about securing french windows?

They should be fitted with the bolts illustrated in Figs. 2 and 3 at top and bottom of each leaf to shoot into the lintel and sill.

Thieves often break in through windows. What can be done about this?

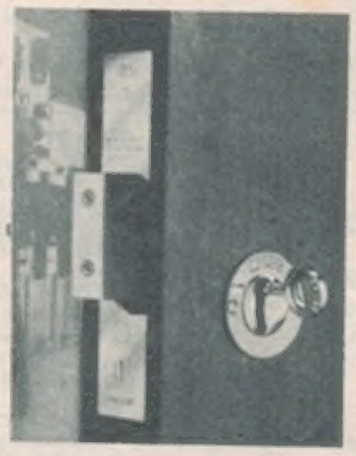
There is a number of key-operated window locks on the market. If you have sash windows you should fit key-operated sash screws (Fig. 4) to prevent a thief slipping a knife between the sashes to ease back the ordinary fastener and force up the sash. Better still, you should fit key-operated sash stops (Fig. 5) which permit ventilation but still prevent the sash being forced up. If your windows are wooden-framed casements, key-operated mortice rack bolts (Fig. 2) afford protection against the thief who breaks the glass and lifts up the fastener. An easy-to-fit alternative is the Rola "C" lock, which screws to the frame. This lock can also be used for a fanlight. For metal-framed casements, you can either fit built-in key-operated locks (Fig. 6), or the Rola "M" which secure existing window fasteners.

In case a thief does succeed in gaining entry, where do you advise me to keep family valuables?

If they are very valuable, you should keep them in the bank—otherwise in a good-quality safe. A small wall safe, properly concealed, is better than no safe at all and is quite cheap to install.

Are there any other special precautions I should take?

Yes, don't forget the fanlights when you are locking up and don't leave keys in locks on the insides of doors. They can be manipulated from outside. Above all, don't advertise your absence when you go away by omitting to stop tradesmen's deliveries and your newspapers.



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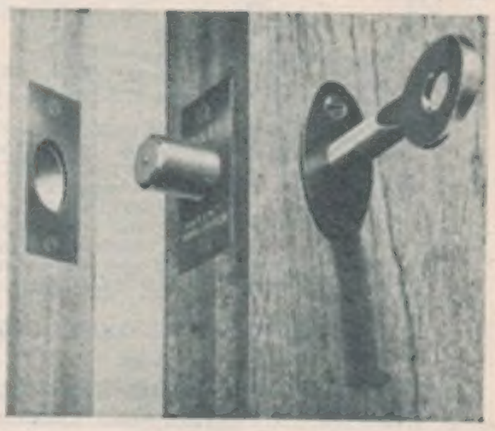

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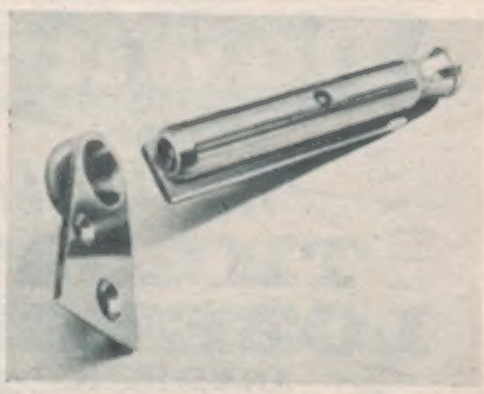

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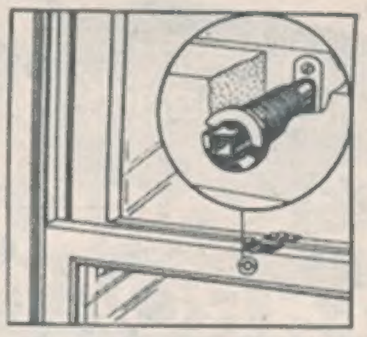

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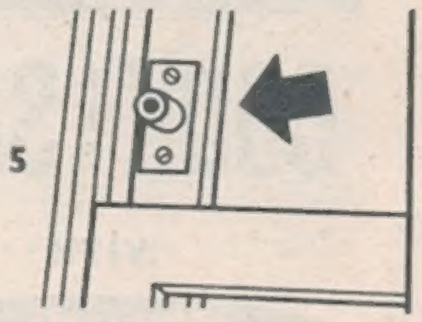

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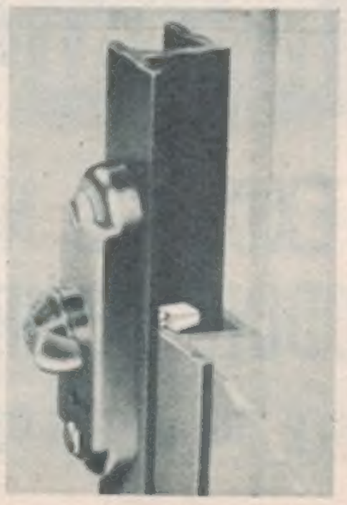

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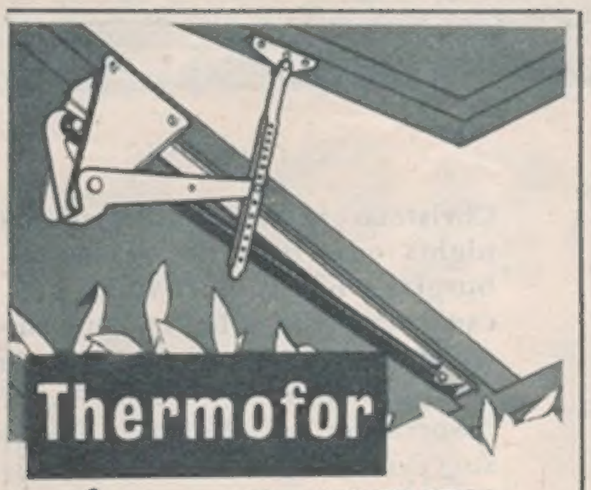

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WITH

12 EXCITING NEW PUDDING RECIPES

Hurry for your copy!

Readers seeking advice from our team of experts are invited to send their problems to the "John Bull and Illustrated" Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Letters will be answered by post, and problems of general interest will also be published on this page.

We advise . . .

I WISH to apply for a legal separation from my husband for desertion. Could you advise me to whom I must write?—M. L., Ilfracombe.

● You will have to apply to the local magistrates' court. The proceedings will be held in private and if you have a word with the probation officer, he will help you in the matter. If your husband agrees, you can have a separation order drawn up by a solicitor, but the former course is usually preferable.

WHO GETS WHAT?

MY brother died recently without making a will. There are three of us left, one sister and two brothers. We had a sister who died ten years ago, leaving six children. Are these nephews and nieces entitled to any of the money left by my brother?—T. B., Bakewell.

● As your brother died intestate, his estate passes to all his brothers and sisters in equal shares. The children of your deceased sister will take the share she would have had if she had lived.

TROUBLE COOKING

THE scullery of our bungalow was so tiny we had to knock down a partition to give more room. Now the walls of the room are continually being discoloured by the gas cooker. We can keep the windows open—but not, of course, in winter.—D. A. R., Parkstone, Dorset.

● One answer is to keep the room permanently warm in winter; an oil heater or small electric convector would help.

You could also try installing a Nu-Aire fan (manufactured by Tack Air Conditioning, 1-5 Longmoor Street, S.W.1) into the kitchen window, or have a hood over your cooker, connected to a vent in an ouside wall.

PENNY PUZZLE

ALTHOUGH I have handled hundreds of pennies since the Queen came to the throne, I have come across only one with her head on. I am puzzled as to what has become of the others. Why is there such a scarcity?—H. C., Colchester.

● No pennies bearing the Queen's head have been circulated since her accession as there are enough of previous reigns in circulation already.

However, many pennies were issued in souvenir sets in Coronation Year and some have probably got into circulation.

MADDENING SMOKE

WE are being driven mad by smoke which billows out of the fireplace every time someone opens a door. How can we stop it?—Mrs. O. B., Reading.

● Your fireplace doesn't appear to have a strong enough up-draught. A long cowl on the chimney pot to lengthen the flue and diminish down-draughts might cure the trouble. Better still fit a modern controlled draught convector.

FURRY FOREIGNERS

I AM anxious to import from the U.S.A. some chinchillas, primarily for the improvement of my stock, but also for resale in the United Kingdom. Will you please let me know what formalities and regulations govern the importation of animals from America?—H. B., Norwich.

● There are no restrictions on the importation of chinchillas; they do not even require an import licence, nor are these animals subject to quarantine.

Thomas Cook & Son, Livestock Department, 70 Cowcross Street, London, E.C.1, will make all the necessary travelling arrangements for you and deliver the animals safely to your home address.

You must obtain permission from the Bank of England to send money in payment to the U.S.A. This should be done through a bank.

EASY TERMS

THE Inspector of Taxes states that I owe £49, representing underpaid income tax in respect of untaxed interest omitted from my income tax return. He asked me whether I agree to pay the amount in a lump sum. Is this necessary or can it be paid by instalments?—G. M., Cardiff.

● As a general rule, the Revenue authorities look for payment of a liability in respect of back duty in a lump sum, but as the amount is comparatively small, you may be able to arrange with the inspector for it to be collected over two or three years by amendment to your P.A.Y.E. coding.

THAT NEIGHBOURLY NUISANCE

AFTER many polite attempts to persuade my neighbour to fit a suppressor to his car had met with rude refusals, I reported the matter to the post office. I was surprised to be told that they would ask my neighbour to fit a suppressor, but if he refused, they could do nothing about it. Surely it is now a punishable offence to create interference with radio or television programmes?—A. W., Saltdean, Sussex.

● It is illegal for any car manufactured after July 1, 1953, not to be fitted with a suppressor. For cars made before that date the G.P.O. can only request that a suppressor be fitted.

However, it is difficult to understand anyone not fitting a suppressor to a car. They cost about half a crown and are fitted simply between the engine coil and the distributor.

GREASY CEILING

OUR ceiling was marked by ugly spots and I repainted it with a wall paint. Now the marks are beginning to show through again. Is there any sealer paint I can use on it?—A. S., Rugby.

● You will have to remove the grease stains before repainting or you will find your trouble recurring.

Place a double piece of blotting paper over small stains and apply a hot iron. Clean larger areas with Polyclens.

When you've removed the grease, paint the ceiling with Polylina which provides a good cellulose seal and base on which you can paint.

A FRANK ANSWER

WHAT is the best way to get a collection of stamps valued and sold?—H. E. G., Wrexham.

● You will find a list of stamp dealers and valuers in the classified directories at your nearest post office or public library, or you can address an inquiry to the secretary of the Philatelic Traders Society, 2 Clement Inn, London, E.C.2.

Valuers charge a percentage fee for their services. One well-known and reputable firm is H. R. Harmer, Ltd., 39-41 New Bond Street, London, W.1.

IN NEED OF TRANSPORT

A FRIEND told me that as a disabled person I could buy a motor car free of purchase tax. Could you please say whether there is any such concession and, if so, what are the conditions?—T. B., Surbiton, Surrey.

● There is no such concession. Your friend is possibly thinking of the cars which were supplied to certain war disabled pensioners free of charge just after the second World War.

Motor propelled tricycles may be supplied by the Ministry of Health to disabled people who have both legs amputated or have lost the use of their legs.

They may also go to badly disabled people who need motor tricycles to keep their jobs. The procedure is for a hospital consultant to apply to the Ministry of Health's appliance centre for an investigation by the local medical committee.

On the latter's recommendation, the Ministry will provide a tricycle and sometimes a petrol allowance. General inquiries on this subject should be addressed to the secretary of the management committee of the disabled person's hospital.

How to beat a banging door

EVERY time my husband goes through a door he bangs it. I am prone to bad headaches and wonder if there is any way of lessening the noise of doors. — Mrs. N. B., Solihull, Warwicks.

● A simple way to cushion the noise is to fit Stick-a-Seal plastic foam draught strip round the edges of the door frame where the door closes against it.

Available at ironmongers or general stores, the strip is self-adhesive and two layers can be used, if necessary.

WIN £750 CASH
for FUN WITH WORDS!

MEET Mr. R. A. Constance (Cheltenham), who's just won £500 in Bullets. His cheque makes possible a new car, house repairs and a super holiday in 1959. What would *you* do with £750?

FORGET Christmas for a few minutes and think about 1959. This grand Bullets Contest brings you 100 opportunities of winning a New Year cheque for Fun With Words. As much as £750 can be your reward—a thrilling start to 1959 for you.

Note that you can add a £3 Ronson luxury lighter to any cheque you win with your coupon below. And to secure an EXTRA £2 CASH as explained — post your coupon by Monday, December 22!

100 NEW YEAR CHEQUES

£300 £25, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 3 of £5, 10 of £2 10s., 80 of £1, 1,500 "GOOD SHOT" AWARDS each with £1,000 SURPRISE

If your First Prize Bullet this week is adjudged best of Contests 2,172, 2,173, 2,174, your £300 First Prize will be increased to £750.

Extra £2 for YOU? Post coupon below by MON., DEC. 22 —£2 EXTRA CASH will then be added to any of the TOP 20 cheques you win.

UP TO **100** £3 RONSON LIGHTERS —see details on coupon

THIS WAY TO WIN

HERE'S how to shape a Bullet. First, grasp the broad idea by enjoying the latest winners. Then choose as your starting-point any Example from list below. To it, add TWO, THREE or FOUR words to make the whole into a bright Bullet.

On The 1959 Menu	Housewife's Nightmare
Smiling Today	Too Much Coal
A Bob Or Two Down And	A Bit Dim
In Life's Tournament	In The Prison Pantomime
Man With A Double	By Leaps And Bounds
The Communist Serpent	Tickled Pink
Those Bells	To Make It Last
On A Slippery Slope	One Over The Eight
Time Is Precious, So	A Smasher
Kind Words	When She's Had Her Say

Last six Examples are incomplete: if you wish to use one, first complete it with a word of your choice—then make your Bullet as above.

World That's..... .....Collection
If I Knew..... The Way Things .....
What To .....Next They All ....., But

POST by MON., DEC. 22 FOR £2 EXTRA CASH

EXAMPLE ..... 1s.
BULLET

EX. ..... 1s.
B.

EX. ..... 1s.
B.

EX ..... 4th BULLET FREE WITH 3 PAID
B.

£3 RONSONS A £3 Ronson Adonis Lighter goes to each of the 100 chief winners whose successful Bullet was one of three or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

2,172 For £2 Bonus, post by Dec. 22—otherwise, post not later than last collection on **MON., DEC. 29**

I agree to rules and enclose P.O. entry-fee as indicated above.

Signed.....

Address.....

P.O. Value.....

No.....

LATEST WINNERS

Bullets No. 2,167* Result: **£500** plus £50 Xmas Tree Presentation: E. H. Cole, 66 Abbotts Walk, Bexleyheath:

A Mockery— Of "Hark—!"—World's Listening-posts.

£25 Mrs. Nottingham, 17 Waterloo Road, South Yardley, Birmingham: **The British Tommy—"Good *Egg*" Advertising "*Lion*"!**

£10 P. Alexander, 1st. Bn. Q.R.R., Mons Barracks, Iserlohn, B.F.P.O. 24: **Getting All The Votes—With Cars—Or *Drive*?**

£9 J. E. Hewitt, 6 Kingswood Street, Belfast: **A Stormy Future—For Windless, Rainless Moon?**

£8 F. L. Geber, 17 Wynn Road, Wolverhampton: **What We Want Today—"The Edge" *Without* "Grind"?**

£7 B. Topliss, 97 Station Road, Rolleston, Burton-on-Trent: **What We Want Today—Stability—*And* "Shaking Up"!**

£6 F. Scott, 122 Westgate, Whitworth, Rochdale: **"I'll Better It!"—Beats That "Beat *That*!"**

£5 W. D. Bainborough, 68 Sandown Road, Toton, Notts: **It's A Bad Job When—Englishman's "Castle", Television's "*Temple*"!**

£5 E. Long, 13 Dunvegan Street, Barrow-in-Furness: **At Grips With Makarios—Grandpa? Awoke Untangling Beard!**

£5 R. Perry, 112 Stanbridge Road, Leighton Buzzard: **What We Want Today—Shorter Hours? *Surer* Hours!**

(Each winner from £25 to £5 receives also a Christmas Turkey.) Ten winners of £2 10s. plus Turkey have been notified. 1,600 other Awards have also been posted.

Expert comments on winning Bullets are in "Comp"—the Competitors' Journal—each Monday.

RULES 1. First Prize for best Bullet received; others in order of merit. The test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all Bullets received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover Bullets in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed at 1s. per Bullet. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated January 24), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Hera'd" on Saturday, January 10, for early news of No. 2,172 result.)

POST ENTRY

Bullets 2,172, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.99

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WATNEYS DAIRYMAID STOUT: SWEET, SATISFYING, INEXPENSIVE.

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